



THE
WORKS
OF
M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Translated from the FRENCH.

WITH
NOTES, HISTORICAL, CRITICAL,
AND EXPLANATORY.

By T. FRANCKLIN, D. D.

Chaplain to his Majesty, and late Greek Professor in
the University of Cambridge.

T. SMOLLETT, M. D.
AND OTHERS.

A NEW EDITION.

VOLUME XX.

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THE

WORKS

M. DE VOLTAIRE



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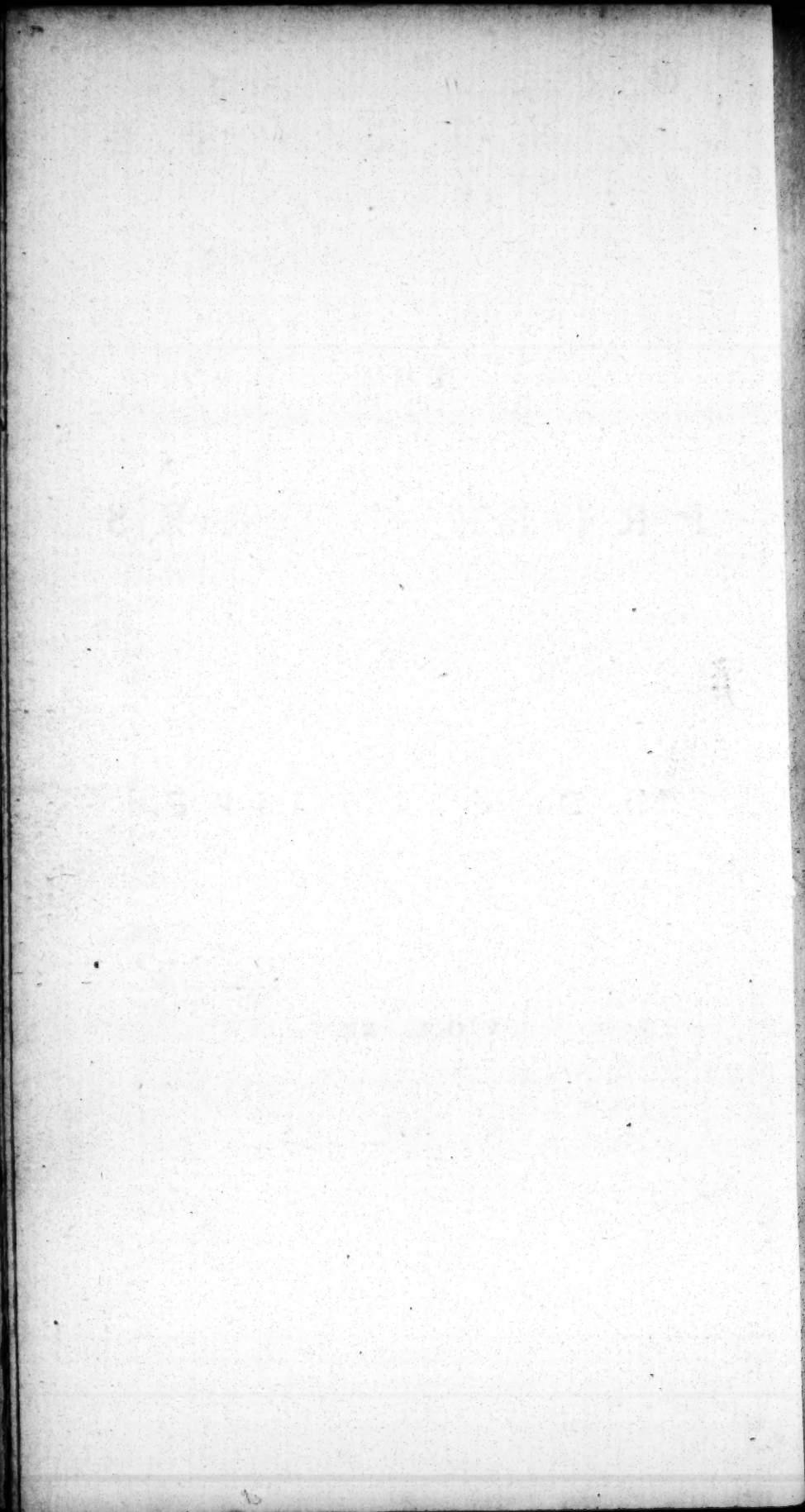
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L O N D O N

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THE
PROSE WORKS
OF
MR. DE VOLTAIRE.

VOL. XX.



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THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
UNDER
PETER THE GREAT.
PART I.

HISTORY

OF THE

RUSSIAN EMPIRE

BY

GEORGE

PART I

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

S E C T. I.

WHO could have pretended to say, in the year 1700, that a magnificent and polite court would be formed at the extremity of the gulph of Finland? that the inhabitants of Solikam, Casan, and the banks of the Wolga and Saick, would be ranked amongst our best disciplined troops, and gain victories in Germany, after defeating the Swedes and the Turks; that an empire of two thousand leagues in length, almost unknown to us before, should in the space of fifty years become a well-governed state, and extend its influence to all the European courts? and that in 1759, the most zealous patron of learning in Europe, should be a Russian? Any one who had said this, would have passed for the most chimerical mortal upon earth. PETER the GREAT, therefore, who singly planned and executed this amazing and altogether unforeseen revolution, is, perhaps, of all princes, the one whose deeds are most worthy of being transmitted to posterity.

The court of Petersbourg has furnished the historian, charged with compiling this work, with all the authentic documents. It is said in

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the body of this history, that these memoirs are deposited in the public library of Geneva, a well-known and frequented city, in the neighbourhood of which the author lives ; but as the whole of the instructions and journal of Peter the Great have not yet been communicated to him, he has thought proper to keep these records at his own house ; where the curious may have a sight of them, with as much ease as from the library-keepers at Geneva, and the whole shall be deposited there as soon as the second volume is finished.

The public have already several pretended histories of Peter the Great, most of them compiled from news-papers. That which was published at Amsterdam, in four volumes, under the name of the *Boyard Nestesuranoy*, is one of those impositions of the press, which are become too common amongst us. Of this kind are the memoirs of Spain, under the name of *Don Juan de Colmenar*, and the history of Lewis XIV. compiled by *La Motte*, the jesuit, from pretended papers of a minister of state, and ascribed to *La Martiniere*. Such also are the histories of the emperor Charles VI. of Prince Eugene, and many others.

In this manner has the noble art of printing been made to serve the purposes of the vilest traffick. A Dutch bookseller orders a book to be wrote, just as a manufacturer gives directions for weaving a piece of cloth ; and unhappily there are authors to be found, whose necessities oblige them to sell their labours to these dealers, like workmen, for hire ; hence arise these insipid panegyrics, and defamatory libels, with which

the public is over-run, and is one of the most shameful vices of the age.

Never did history stand more in need of authentic vouchers, than at this time, when so infamous a traffic is made of falshood. The author who now offers to the public, *The History of the RUSSIAN EMPIRE under PETER the GREAT*, is the same who thirty years ago wrote the history of Charles the XII. from the papers of several eminent persons in public stations, who had lived with that monarch for a considerable time. The present history is a confirmation of, and supplement to the former.

And here the author thinks himself obliged, out of respect to the public, and a regard to truth, to set to view an undeniable testimony of the degree of credit due to the history of Charles XII.

Not long since, the king of Poland and duke of Lorrain ordered that work to be read over a second time to him at Commercy, when he was struck with the truth of a multitude of facts, to which he himself had been eye-witness, and so incensed at the boldness with which certain libellers and journalists had controverted their authenticity, that he resolved to enforce, by the authority of his own testimony, the credit due to the historian; and as it was not proper for him to write himself, he ordered one of the great officers of his household, to draw up the following instrument, * in form of a certificate.

* Finding himself under a necessity of printing this certificate, the author has only taken the liberty of sparing the reader some expressions which appeared too favourable, being fully sensible that he owes them wholly to the indulgence and goodness of the prince; and for that reason, has confined himself to such parts of it only as give testimony in favour of the truth.

“ Nous Lieutenant Général des armées du
 “ Roi, Grand Maréchal des Logis de sa Ma-
 “ jesté Polonoise, et Commandant en Toulous,
 “ les deux Barois, &c. certifions que sa Ma-
 “ jesté Polonoise, après avoir entendu la lecture
 “ de l'histoire de CHARLES XII. écrite par
 “ Monsieur De V (dernière édition de
 “ Genève) après avoir loué le stile de
 “ cette histoire, et avoir admiré ces traits
 “ qui caractérisent tous les ouvrages de cet il-
 “ lustre auteur, nous a fait l'honneur de nous
 “ dire qu'il était prêt à donner un certificat à
 “ Monsieur De V , pour constater l'ex-
 “ acte vérité des faits contenus dans cette his-
 “ toire. Ce Prince a ajouté que Monsieur De
 “ V n'a oublié, ni déplacé aucun fait,
 “ aucune circonstance intéressante, que tout est
 “ vrai, que tout est en son ordre dans cette his-
 “ toire : qu'il a parlé sur la Pologne, et sur
 “ tous les événemens qui y sont arrivés, &c.
 “ comme s'il en eût été témoin oculaire. Cer-
 “ tifions de plus, que ce Prince nous a ordonné
 “ d'écrire sur le champ à Monsieur De V
 “ pour lui rendre compte de ce que nous venions
 “ d'entendre, & l'assurer de son estime & de son
 “ amitié.

“ Le vif intérêt que nous prenons à la gloire
 “ de Monsieur De V & celui que tout
 “ honnête-homme doit avoir pour ce qui con-
 “ state la vérité des faits dans les histoires con-
 “ temporaires, nous a pressé de demander au
 “ Roi de Pologne la permission d'envoyer à
 “ Monsieur De V un certificat en forme
 “ de tout ce que sa Majesté nous avait fait
 “ l'honneur de nous dire. Le Roi de Pologne,
 “ non seulement y a consenti, mais même nous

" a ordonné de l'envoyer, avec prière à Mon-
 " sieur De V d'en faire usage toutes les
 " fois qu'il le jugera à propos, soit en le com-
 " muniquant, soit en le faisant imprimer, &c.
 " Fait à Commercy ce 11. Juillet 1759.

" Le Comte DE TRESSAN."

Translation of the above Instrument.

" We lieutenant-general of the king's ar-
 " mies, grand-marshal of the household to his
 " Polish majesty, and commandant of Toul, of
 " the Two Bars, &c. do hereby certify, that his
 " said Polish majesty, on hearing read to him
 " the History of Charles XII. written by Mr.
 " de V—— (the last Geneva edition) not
 " only recommended the style of that
 " history, and expressed his admiration of the
 " strokes which characterise all the wri-
 " tings of that celebrated author; but has more-
 " over done us the honour of signifying to us,
 " that he was ready to grant a certificate to Mr.
 " de V——, for the better ascertaining the ex-
 " act truth of the facts contained in that His-
 " tory. His majesty, at the same time, adding,
 " that Mr. de V—— has neither omitted nor
 " misplaced any one fact, or interesting circum-
 " stance; that the whole is agreeable to truth,
 " and every event disposed in its proper order;
 " and that he has spoken of every thing relating
 " to Poland, and the events which happened
 " there, &c. as if he had been an eye-witness.
 " We moreover certify, that his majesty or-
 " dered us to write immediately to Mr. de
 " V——,

“ V——, to acquaint him with what we had
“ heard, and to assure him of his majesty’s
“ friendship and esteem.

“ The great regard we have for Mr. de
“ V——’s reputation, and that concern which
“ every honest man ought to have, for what-
“ ever serves to establish the truth of facts in
“ histories of our own times, has induced us to
“ ask permission of his Polish majesty, to trans-
“ mit to Mr. de V——, a formal certificate of
“ whatever his majesty had been pleased to im-
“ part to us. To which his majesty was not
“ only pleased readily to consent, but even gave
“ his express orders for us to send it, with his
“ desire that Mr. de V—— would, on all oc-
“ casions, make such use of it as he should
“ judge proper, either by communicating it,
“ having it printed, &c.”

“ Done at Commercy, this 11th day of
“ July, 1759.

“ The Count DE TRESSAN.”

When this instrument was sent to the author,
it gave him a surprise, so much the more agree-
able, as it came from a prince who was as well
acquainted with the several transactions, as
Charles XII. himself; and is, besides, so well
known to all Europe for his regard to truth,
and his humanity and benevolence.

There are a great number of testimonies, no
less authentic, relating to the history of the age
of Lewis XIV. a work of equal truth and im-
portance, that breathes a spirit of patriotism, but
without suffering that spirit to injure truth,
to exaggerate the good, or to disguise the
evil;

evil ; a work composed without any views of interest, without hope and without fear, by a person, whose situation in life places him above the necessity of flattering any one.

There are very few authorities quoted in the Age of Lewis XIV. as the events of the first years being known to every one, wanted only to be placed in their proper light ; and as to those of later date, the author speaks of them as an eye witness. On the contrary, in the History of the Russian Empire, he always quotes his vouchers, the principal of which is Peter the Great himself.

S E C T. II.

We have not been at the pains, in this History of Peter the Great, to make any idle researches into the origin of most of the nations, of which the immense empire of Russia is composed, from Kamtschatka to the Baltic sea. It is a strange undertaking to go about, to prove by authentic pieces, that the Huns removed, in former times, from the north of China into Siberia ; and that the Chinese themselves are an Egyptian colony. I know that some philosophers of great reputation have imagined they saw a conformity between these people, in some particulars ; but their surmises have been made a bad use of, by some who have attempted to convert their conjectures into certainty.

Thus, for instance, they now pretend to prove, that the Egyptians were the ancestors of the Chinese. An ancient writer has told us, that the Egyptian king Sesostris went as far as the river Ganges ; now, if he went as far as

the Ganges, he might have gone to China, which is at a great distance from the Ganges, therefore he did go thither; but China, at that time, was not peopled, therefore it is clear that Sesostris peopled China. The Egyptians used lighted tapers at their festivals, the Chinese used lanthorns; it cannot, therefore, be doubted, that the Chinese are an Egyptian colony. Furthermore, the Egyptians have a great river, so have the Chinese also: Lastly, it is evident, that the first kings of China bore the same names as the ancient kings of Egypt; for in the name of the family of *Yu*, we may trace characters, which, disposed after another manner, form the word *Menes*. Therefore, it is incontestable, that the emyeror *Yu* took his name from *Menes*, king of Egypt; and the emperor *Ki* is plainly king *Aiöes*, by changing *K* into *A*, and *i* into *öes*.

But if a learned man of Tobolski or Pekin was to read some of our books, he might demonstrate still more clearly, that the French are descended from the Trojans. He might prove it in the following manner, and astonish his countrymen by his profound researches. The most ancient writings, he might say, and those in most esteem in that little country of the West, called France, are romances: these were written in a pure language, derived from the ancient Romans, who were famous for never advancing a falsehood. Now upwards of twenty of these authentic books, affirm, that *Francis*, the founder of the monarchy of the Franks, was son to Hector. The name of Hector has ever since been preserved by this nation; and even in the present

present century, one of their greatest generals was called Hector de Villars.

The neighbouring nations (he would continue) are so unanimous in acknowledging this truth, that Ariosto, one of the most learned of the Italians, owns in his Orlando, that Charlemagne's knights fought for Hector's helmet. Lastly, there is one proof which admits of no reply; namely, that the ancient Franks, to perpetuate the memory of the Trojans, their ancestors, built a new city called Troye, in the province of Champagne; and these modern Trojans have always retained so strong an aversion to their enemies, the Greeks, that there is not at present four persons in the whole province of Champagne, who will learn their language: nay, they would never admit any jesuits amongst them, probably because they had heard it said, that some of that body used formerly to explain Homer in their public schools.

It is certain, that such arguments might produce a great effect at Tobolski or Peking; but then again, another learned man might overturn this fine hypothesis, by proving that the Parisians are descended from the Greeks: for, he might say, the first president of one of the courts of judicature of Paris, was named *Achille du Harlai*. *Achille* is evidently derived from the Greek *Achilles*, and *Harlai* from *Aristos*, by changing *istos* into *lai*. The Elysian fields (*champs elisées*) which still exist near one of the gates of the city, and mount Olympus, which is still to be seen in the neighbourhood of Meziere, are monuments, against which the most obstinate incredulity cannot hold out. Furthermore, all the Athenian customs are preserved at

Paris; the citizens pass sentence there upon tragedies and comedies, with as much levity as the Athenians did; they crown the generals of their armies on the public theatres, as was done at Athens; and lastly, marshal Saxe received publicly, from the hands of an actress, a crown, which could not be given to him in the cathedral. The Parisians have academies, derived from those of Athens, as likewise ecclesiastic canons, a liturgy, parishes, and dioceses, all Greek inventions, and the terms themselves all taken from the Greek language; nay, the very distempers of these people have their appellations from the Greek, *viz. apoplexy, phthisic, peripneumony, cachexy, dysentery, jealousy, &c.*

It must be acknowledged, that this opinion would weigh considerably against the authority of the learned personage, who had just demonstrated, that we were a Trojan colony; and both these opinions might be again contradicted by other profound antiquarians, some of whom might prove that we are Egyptians, and that the worship of Isis was established at the village of Isis, on the road from Paris to Versailles; while others again might demonstrate, that we are of Arabian extraction, as witness the words *almanac, alembic, algebra, admiral*. The Chinese and Siberian literati would be greatly puzzled to decide the question; and, after all, would very likely leave us just what we are.

It seems, then, that we must still remain in uncertainty, concerning the origin of all nations. It is the same with respect to a whole people, as with particular families. Several German barons pretend to be descended, in a direct

direct line, from Arminius; in like manner as a pedigree was composed for Mahomet, by which his origin was derived immediately from Abraham and Hagar.

In like manner, the family of the ancient czars of Muscovy, was said to come from *Bela*, king of Hungary; this *Bela* from *Attila*, *Attila* from *Turck*, the father of the Huns; and this *Turck* was the son of *Japhet*. His brother *Russ* founded the empire of Russia, and another brother, named *Cameri*, founded a state towards the river Wolga.

All these sons of Japhet were, as every one knows, the grandsons of Noah, whose three sons made what haste they could to procure themselves settlements, at the distance of a thousand leagues from each other, lest they should be of any assistance to each other; and, in all probability, by lying with their sisters, became the fathers of millions of inhabitants, in the space of a very few years.

A number of grave writers have traced these descents, with much the same exactness and sagacity as they discovered the manner in which the Japonese peopled Peru. History has for a long time been written in this taste; a taste to which president de Thou, and Rapin Thoyras, seem to have been absolute strangers.

S E C T. III.

If we are to be upon our guard against those historians, who go back to the tower of Babel, and to the deluge, we ought to be no less sparing of our credit to those who enter into a minute detail of modern history, penetrate into all the

secrets of cabinets; and are so unfortunately minute, as to give an exact relation of every battle, when even the generals themselves would have found great difficulty in doing it.

Since the beginning of the last century, there have been near two hundred capital battles fought in Europe, most of them more bloody than those of Arbella and Pharsalia; but as very few of these actions produced any great consequences, they are lost to posterity. Were there but one book in the world, children would know every line of it by heart, and be able to tell every syllable: in like manner, had there been but one battle, the name of each soldier would be known, and his pedigree handed down to future ages; but in such a long, and almost continued succession of bloody wars among christian princes, the ancient interests are all changed, and give way to new ones; the battles fought twenty years ago are effaced by those of the present time; as at Paris, the news of yesterday is forgotten in that of to-day; and this, in its turn, will be lost in that of to-morrow: and almost every event is plunged by another into perpetual oblivion. This is a reflection which cannot be dwelt upon too much; it serves to comfort us under the misfortunes we suffer, and to shew us the nothingness of all human affairs. Nought then remains in history, worthy of fixing the attention of mankind, but those striking revolutions which have wrought a change in the manners and laws of great states; and upon this principle the history of Peter the Great is worthy of being known.

If we have dwelt somewhat too long upon the particulars of certain battles and sieges, which resemble others of the same nature, we crave pardon of the philosophic reader; and have no other excuse to offer, but that these little facts, being connected with great ones, must necessarily make a part of the whole.

We have refuted Norberg in some passages, which appeared to us the most important; but have left him quietly to enjoy his mistakes where they are of no consequence.

S E C T. IV.

The history of Peter the Great is written as concise, and at the same time as copious, as possible. There are histories of small provinces, little towns, and even of convents of monks, that take up several volumes in folio. The memoirs of a certain abbot, who retired for some years into Spain, where he scarce did any thing worth notice, employ seven volumes; whereas one has been found sufficient for the life of Alexander the Great.

Perhaps there may still be some of those overgrown children, who had rather read the fabulous stories of Osiris, Bacchus, Hercules, and Theseus, consecrated by antiquity, than the true history of a modern prince; either because the antique names of Osiris and Hercules sound more agreeable in their ears than that of Peter; or that the overthrowing of giants and lions, is more pleasing to a weak imagination, than the history of useful laws and noble enterprises: and yet we must acknowledge, that the defeat of the giant of Epidaurum, and of the robber Sinnis,
and

and the combat with *Crommion's* sow, are not equal to the exploits of the conqueror of Charles XII. the founder of Petersburg, and the legislator of a most potent empire.

It is true, the ancients taught us how to think justly, and it would be very extraordinary to prefer *Anacharis*, the Scythian, merely for his antiquity, to the modern Scythian, who has civilized so many people. We see no reason why the law-giver of Russia should give way either to Lycurgus or Solon. Are the laws of the latter, which recommend the love of boys to the citizens of Athens, and forbid it to the slaves, or those of the former, which ordered young women to box naked in the public market-place, to be preferred to the laws of him who civilized the people of both sexes in his dominions, and made them fit for society? who formed a military discipline by sea and land, and who opened a free passage for the arts and sciences into his native country?

This history contains the transactions of his public life, which were useful; and not those of his private life, of which we have but few particulars, and those sufficiently known. It is not for a stranger to disclose the secrets of his cabinet, his bed, or his table. Were any person capable of furnishing such anecdotes, it must have been prince Menzikoff, or general Shermetow, who were long the companions of his most retired hours: but they have not done it; and whatever comes to us, only from the authority of public rumour, does not deserve belief. Men of sense had rather behold a great man, labouring for five and twenty years, for the welfare of a vast empire, than be informed, from
vague

vague and idle accounts, of the foibles which this great prince might have in common with the meanest of his subjects.

S E C T. V.

In what relates only to style, criticism, or the private reputation of an author, it is better to let the herd of petty pamphleteers snarl on unnoticed, since it would be making ourselves as ridiculous as them, to lose time in answering, or even in reading their productions; but when important facts are concerned, truth must sometimes stoop to confound the falsties of these despicable wretches; their infamy should no more hinder her from clearing herself, than the vileness of a criminal, among the dregs of the people, should stop the course of justice against him. It was this two-fold reason, then, that obliged us to silence that impudent ignoramus, who corrupted the age of Lewis XIV. by notes, as absurd as they were malicious; in which he brutally insults a branch of the house of France, the whole house of Austria, and above an hundred other illustrious families in Europe: to whose very antichambers he is as much a stranger, as to the facts which he has thus insolently falsified.

The ease with which a writer may impose upon the public, and spread abroad the most flagrant calumnies, is, unhappily, one of the greatest inconveniences attending the noble art of printing.

Le Vassor, a priest of the oratory, and La Motte, a jesuit; the one a beggar in England, and the other in Holland; both of them wrote history for bread. The former chose Lewis
XIII.

XIII. of France for the object of his satire, and the latter Lewis XIV. The character of apostates * was by no means likely to secure them a greater degree of credit with the public; nevertheless, it is pleasant to see with what confidence they both declare themselves the depositaries of truth, incessantly repeating this maxim, "That an historian should boldly declare the whole truth." They should have added likewise, that he must, in the first place, be acquainted with it himself.

Their own maxim is their fullest condemnation; but even this maxim calls for a strict examination, as it is become the excuse of all satirists.

All truths of public utility and importance ought, doubtless, to be revealed: but if there should be any malicious anecdote relating to a prince; if in his domestic concerns he may, like a number of private persons, have given too much way to some human frailties, known, perhaps, only to one or two confidants, who has authorized you to reveal to the public, what these confidants ought not to have disclosed to any one? I will grant that you might yourself have discovered this secret: but why should you tear asunder the veil with which every man has a right to cover the recesses of his own house? What is your reason for making the scandal public? You will say, to indulge the curiosity of mankind, to please their malice, and to sell my book, which otherwise, perhaps, would not be

* Both Le Vassor and La Motte changed their religion, and embraced the Protestant faith, upon their retiring to Holland.
read.

read. You are then only a defamer, a libeller, and a broacher of calumnies, but not an historian.

If this foible of a man, in public life ; if this private vice, which you so industriously endeavour to drag to light, has had any influence on public affairs ; if it has occasioned the loss of a battle, has hurt the revenue of a state, or made the subject unhappy, then you ought to mention it. It is your duty to discover the minute and hidden cause which produced such great events ; but otherwise you should be silent.

“ Let no truth be concealed,” is a maxim that may admit of some exceptions ; but this one will admit of none, “ Acquaint posterity with nothing but what is worthy of posterity.”

S E C T. VI.

Besides the falsity in facts, there is also a falsity in drawing characters. The phrenzy of loading history with these portraits began first in France with the writing of romances, and the famous Clelia brought the madness into fashion. In the infancy of good taste, Sarrazin wrote his history of the conspiracy of Walsstein, who was never concerned in any plot ; and, in drawing the character of this general, whom he never saw, he has given a translation of almost all that Sallust says of Catiline, whom that historian knew so well. This is writing history in an ingenious manner ; but he who makes too great a parade of his wit, only succeeds in shewing it ; which is a matter of very little consequence.

Cardinal de Retz might with propriety give the characters of the principal personages of his time, all of whom he well knew, and who had
all

all been either his friends or his enemies. It is true, he has not drawn them in the manner that Maimbourg has done those of the princes of past times in his romantic histories. But was the Cardinal a faithful painter? Has he not suffered passion, and a fondness for novelty, to misguide his pencil? Ought he, for example, to have expressed himself in this manner to Queen Anne, mother to Lewis XIV.? “ She had
 “ that sort of wit which was just necessary to
 “ keep her from appearing a fool in the eyes of
 “ those who did not know her. She had more
 “ harshness than pride, more pride than true
 “ greatness of soul, more outside than reality,
 “ more regard to money than liberality, more liberality than selfishness, more selfishness than
 “ disinterestedness, more attachment than passion, more insensibility than cruelty, more
 “ superstition than real piety, more obstinacy
 “ than firmness, and more incapacity than of
 “ all the rest.”

It must be owned, that this obscurity of expression, this cluster of antitheses and comparisons, and this burlesque way of drawing characters, so unworthy of history, is not very likely to please those of a good understanding. The lovers of truth will question the fidelity of the portrait when they compare it with the conduct of the Queen; and virtuous minds will be as much disgusted with the ill-nature and contempt, which the historian displays in speaking of a princess, who loaded him with favours, as incensed to see an archbishop stirring up a civil war, merely, as he himself acknowledges, for the pleasure of doing it.

If we are to suspect the fidelity of these portraits, drawn by those who had such opportunities of painting to the life, how can we credit the bare assertion of an historian, who affects to dive into the heart of a prince, that, perhaps, lived six hundred leagues distant from him? In this case, he ought to describe him by his actions, and leave it to those who have long attended his person, to tell the rest.

Harangues or set speeches are another species of oratorical falshood, in which historians formerly indulged themselves. They made their heroes say, what was possible for them to have said. A liberty of this kind might, indeed, be taken with a personage of remoter times, but at present, these fictions are no longer tolerated; nay, we expect much more; for was a writer, at present, to put into the mouth of a prince a speech which he never made, we should consider such author no longer as an historian, but a rhetorician.

A third species of falshood, and, the most gross of all, tho' it had been long the most seducing, is that of the marvellous. This prevails in all the ancient histories, without excepting one.

Some predictions are still to be met with in the history of Charles XII. by Norberg: but we find none in any of the historians of the present age. Omens, prodigies, and apparitions, are now sent back to the regions of fable. History stood in need of being enlightened by philosophy.

INTRODUCTION.

AT the beginning of the present century, the vulgar knew no other hero in the north than Charles XII. of Sweden. His personal valour, which was rather that of a private soldier than a great king, the lustre of his victories, and even of his misfortunes, made an impression on those who are easily struck with great events, but are not so clear-sighted in regard to more slow and useful labours. It was even much doubted at that time by foreign nations, whether Czar Peter I. would be able to go thro' with his great undertakings ; yet they have not only continued, but been improved, especially under the empress Elizabeth, his daughter. This empire is at present reckoned in the number of the most flourishing states ; and Peter is ranked amongst the greatest law-givers : though his undertakings did not stand in need of success in the eyes of wise men, yet this success has perpetuated his glory. We now think that Charles XII. deserved to be the first general under Peter the Great : the one has left only ruins behind him ; the other has been a founder of his empire in every sense. I ventured to pass much the same judgment about thirty years ago, when I was writing the History of Charles XII. The memoirs I have been since furnished with from the court of Russia, afford me the means of making this empire known, whose people are of such antiquity, while their laws, manners, and arts, are all of a new creation.

THE

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
RUSSIAN Empire under PETER the
GREAT.

CHAP. I.

Description of RUSSIA.

THE empire of Russia is the largest in the whole globe, extending from west to east upwards of two thousand common leagues of France*, and about eight hundred in its greatest breadth from north to south. It borders upon Poland and the Frozen Sea, and joins to Sweden and China. Its length from the island of Dago, in the westernmost part of Livonia, to its most eastern limits, takes in near 170 degrees, so that when it is noon in the western parts of the empire, it is nearly midnight in the eastern. Its breadth from north to south is 3600 wrefts, which make 850 of our common French leagues.

The limits of this country were so little known in the last century, that, in 1689, when it

* A French league contains three English miles.

was

it was reported, that the Chinese and the Russians were at war, and that in order to terminate their difference, the emperor *Cam-bi* on the one hand, and the Czars Ivan (or John) and Peter on the other, had sent their ministers to meet an embassy within three hundred leagues of Peking, on the frontiers of the two empires. This account was at first treated as a fiction.

The country now comprehended under the name of Russia, or the Russias, is of a greater extent than all the rest of Europe, or than ever the Roman empire was, or that of Darius subdued by Alexander; for it contains upwards of 1,100,000 square leagues. Neither the Roman empire, nor that of Alexander, contained more than 550,000 each; and there is not a kingdom in Europe the twelfth part so extensive as the Roman empire; but to make Russia as populous, as plentiful, and as well stored with towns as our southern countries, would require whole ages, and a race of monarchs such as Peter the Great.

The English ambassador who resided at Peterburgh in 1733, and who had been at Madrid, says, in his manuscript relation, that in Spain, which is the least populous state in Europe, there may be reckoned 40 persons to every square mile, and in Russia not above five. We shall see, in the second chapter, whether this minister was mistaken. Marshal Vauban, the greatest of engineers, and the best of citizens, computes, that, in France, every square mile contains 200 inhabitants. These calculations are never very exact, but they serve to shew the amazing disproportion in the population of two different countries.

I shall

I shall observe here, that from Petersburg to Pekin, there is hardly one mountain to be met with in the route which the caravans might take thro' independent Tartary, and that from Petersburg to the north of France, by the road of Dantzick, Hambourg, and Amsterdam, there is not even a hill of any eminence to be seen. This observation leaves room to doubt of the truth of that theory, which makes the mountains to have been formed by the rolling of the waves of the sea, and supposes all that is at present dry land, to have been for a long time covered with water: but how comes it to pass, that the waves, which, according to the supposition, formed the Alps, the Pyrenees, and Mount Taurus, did not likewise form some eminence or hill from Normandy to China, which is a winding space of above 3000 leagues? Geography, thus considered, may furnish lights to natural philosophy, or at least give room for rational doubts.

Formerly we called Russia by the name of Muscovy, from the city of Moscow, the capital of that empire, and the residence of the grand dukes: but at present the ancient name of Russia prevails.

It is not my business in this place to enquire, why the countries from Smolensko to the other side of Moscow, were called White Russia, or why Hubner gives it the name of Black, nor for what reason the government of *Kiow* should be named Red Russia.

It is very likely that *Madies* the Scythian, who made an irruption into Asia, near seven hundred years before our vulgar æra, might have carried his arms into these regions, as *Gengis-Kan* and *Tamerlane* did afterwards, and as pro-

probably others had done long before Madies. Every part of antiquity is not deserving of our enquiries; that of the Chinese, the Indians, the Persians, and the Egyptians, is ascertained from illustrious and interesting monuments; but these monuments suppose others of a far more ancient date, since it required many ages to teach men the art of transmitting their thoughts by permanent signs, and no less time was required to form a regular language; and yet we have no such monuments, even in this polite part of Europe. The art of writing was a long time unknown to all the North: the patriarch Constantine, who wrote the history of Kiow in the Russian language, acknowledges, that the use of writing was not known in these countries in the fifth century.

Let others examine whether the Huns, the Slavi, and the Tartars, formerly led their wandering and famished tribes towards the source of the Boristhenes*; my design is to shew what Czar Peter created, and not to engage in an useless attempt, to clear up the chaos of antiquity. We should always keep in mind, that no family upon earth knows its first founder, and consequently, that no nation knows its first origin.

I use the name of Russians to designate the inhabitants of this great empire. That of Roxolaniens, which was formerly given them, would indeed be more sonorous, but we should conform to the custom of the language in which

* The Boristhenes or Dnieper is one of the largest rivers in Europe; it rises in the Walchonske Forest, runs thro' Lithuania, the country of the Zaporag Cossacks and that of the Nagaisch Tartars, and falls into the Black sea near Oczakow. It has 13 cataracts within a small distance.

R U S S I A N E M P I R E.

5

we write. News-papers and other memoirs have for some time used the word Russians; but as this name comes too near to that of Prussians, I shall abide by that of Rufs, which almost all our writers have given them. Besides, it appeared to me, that the most extensive people on the earth ought to be known by some appellation that may distinguish them absolutely from all other nations §.

And here it will be necessary for the reader to have recourse to the annexed map, in order to form a clear idea of this empire, which is at present divided into sixteen large governments, that will one day be subdivided, when the northern and eastern countries come to be more inhabited.

These sixteen governments, which contain several immense provinces, are the following.

L I V O N I A.

The nearest province to our part of the world is that of Livonia, one of the most fruitful in the whole north. In the 12th century the inhabitants were pagans; at this time certain merchants of Bremen and Lubeck traded to this country, and a body of religious crusaders, called *Port-glaives*, (or sword bearers) who were afterwards incorporated in the Teutonic order, made themselves masters of this province in the thirteenth century, at the time when the fury of the crusades armed the Christians against every

§ The reader will easily perceive, that the whole of this paragraph relates only to the French language, for in English we make no such distinctions in the name of these people, but always call them Russians.

one who was not of their religion. Albert, margrave of Brandenburg, grand master of these religious conquerors, made himself sovereign of Livonia and of Brandenburg-Prussia, about the year 1514. From that time, the Russians and Poles began to dispute for the possession of this province. Soon afterwards it was invaded by the Swedes, and for a long while continued to be ravaged by these several powers. Gustavus Adolphus having conquered it, it was then ceded to the Swedes in 1660, by the famous treaty of Oliva; and, at length, Czar Peter wrested it from these latter, as will be seen in the course of this history.

Courland, which joins to Livonia, is still in vassalage to Poland, tho' it depends greatly upon Russia. These are the western limits of this empire in Christendom.

Of the governments of REVEL, PETERSBOURG, and WYBOURG.

More northward is the government of Revel and Esthonia. Revel was built by the Danes in the 13th century. The Swedes were in possession of this province, from the time that country put itself under the protection of that crown in 1561. This is another of the conquests of Peter the Great.

On the borders of Esthonia lies the gulph of Finland. To the eastward of this sea, and at the junction of the Neva with the lake Ladoga §, is situated Petersbourg, the most mo-

§ A collection of water lying between the gulph of Finland and lake Onega: it is the largest, and said to contain a greater number of fish than any other in Europe.

dern and best built city in the whole empire, founded by Czar Peter, in spite of all the united obstacles which opposed its foundation.

This city is situated on the bay of Kronstat, in the midst of 9 rivers, by which its different quarters are divided. In the centre of this city is almost an impregnable fortress, built on an island, formed by the main-stream of the river Neva : seven canals are cut from the rivers, and wash the walls of one of the royal palaces of the admiralty, of the dock-yard for the gallies, and of several buildings of manufactories. Thirty-five large churches contribute to adorn the city ; among which five are allotted for foreigners of the Roman Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran religions : these are as so many temples raised to toleration, and examples to other nations. There are five palaces ; the old one, called the summer-palace, situated on the river Neva, has a very large and beautiful stone balustrade, which runs all along the river side. The new summer palace near the triumphal gate, is one of the finest pieces of architecture in Europe. The admiralty buildings, the school for cadets, the imperial college, the academy of sciences, the exchange, and the merchants ware-houses, are all magnificent structures, and monuments of taste and public utility. The town-house, the public dispensary, where all the vessels are of porcelain, the court magazines, the foundery, the arsenal, the bridges, the markets, the squares, the barracks for the horse and foot guards, contribute at once to the embellishment and safety of the city, which is said to contain at present 400,000 souls. In the environs of the city are several villas or country-seats, which surprise all

travellers by their magnificence. There is one in particular which has water-works superior to those of Versailles. There was nothing of all this in 1702, the whole being then an impassable morass. Petersbourg is considered as the capital of Ingria, a small province subdued by Peter I. Wyburg, another of his conquests, and that part of Finland which was lost, and ceded by the Swedes in 1742, makes another government.

A R C H A N G E L.

Higher up, proceeding towards the north, is the province of Archangel, a country entirely new to the southern nations of Europe. It took its name from St. Michael the Archangel, under whose patronage it was put long after the Russians had embraced christianity, which did not happen till the beginning of the 11th century; and they were not known to the other nations of Europe till the middle of the 16th. The English, in 1533, endeavouring to find out a north-east passage to the East Indies, Chancellor, captain of one of the ships fitted out for this expedition, discovered the port of Archangel in the White Sea; at that time it was a desert place, having only one convent, and a little church, dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel.

The English sailing up the river Dwina*, arrived at the midland part of the country, and

* We must not confound this river with another of the same name that runs thro' Lithuania in Poland, and dividing Livonia and Courland, falls into the Baltic at Dunamunderfort below Riga.

at length at Moscow. Here they easily made themselves masters of the trade of Russia, which was removed from the city of Novogorod, where it was carried on by land to this sea port, which is inaccessible indeed during seven months in the year; but, nevertheless, this trade proved more beneficial to the empire, than the fairs of Novogorod, that had fallen to decay in consequence of the wars with Sweden. The English obtained the privilege of trading thither without paying any duties; a manner of trading which is apparently the most beneficial to all nations. The Dutch soon came in for a share of the trade of Archangel, then unknown to other nations.

Long before this time, the Genoese and Venetians had established a trade with the Russians by the mouth of the Tanais or Don†, where they had built a town called Tana. This branch of the Italian commerce was destroyed by the ravages of Tamerlane, in that part of the world: but that of Archangel continued, with great advantages both to the English and Dutch, till the time that Peter the Great opened a passage into his dominions by the Baltic sea.

R U S S I A N L A P L A N D.

Of the government of ARCHANGEL.

To the west of Archangel, and within its government, lies Russian Lapland, the third part of this country, the other two belonging to Swe-

† This was by the ancients reckoned among the most famous rivers in the world, and the boundary between Asia and Europe. It issues from St. John's lake, not far from Tula, and after a long course, divides itself into three arms, and falls into the sea below Azoph.

den and Denmark. This is a very large tract, occupying about eight degrees of longitude, and extending in latitude from one polar circle to the north cape §. The natives of this country were confusedly known to the ancients, under the name of Troglodytes and northern pigmies; appellations suitable enough to men, who, for the most part, are not above four feet and an half high, and dwell in caverns; they are just the same people they were at that time. They are of a tawny complexion, tho' the other people of the north are white, and for the most part very low in stature; tho' their neighbours, and the people of Iceland, under the polar circle, are tall: they seem made for their mountainous country, being nimble, squat, and robust; their skins are hard, the better to resist the cold, their thighs and legs are slender, their feet small, to enable them to run more nimbly amongst the rocks, with which their province is covered; they are passionately fond of their own country, which none but themselves can be pleased with, and are able to live no where else. Some have affirmed, upon the credit of Olaus, that these people were originally natives of Finland; and that they removed into Lapland, where they diminished in stature: but why might they not as well have made choice of lands less northerly, where the conveniencies of life were to be had in greater plenty? How comes it that they differ so totally from their pretended ancestors in features, figure, and complexion? Methinks we might, with as great reason, suppose that the grass which grows in Lapland, is pro-

§ A promontory of the island of Maggero in the north of Norway, and is the most northern point in Europe.

duced from that of Denmark, and that the fishes peculiar to their lakes, came from those of Sweden. It is most likely that the Laplanders are like their animals, the produce of their own country, and that nature has made the one for the other.

Those who inhabit the frontiers of Finland, have adopted some of the expressions of their neighbours, as happens to every people: but when two nations give to things of common use, to objects which are continually before their eyes, names absolutely different, it affords a strong presumption, that one of them is not a colony from the other. The Finlanders call a bear *Karu*, the Laplanders *Muriet*: the sun in the Finnish language is called *Auringa*, in the Lapland tongue *Beve*. Here is not the least analogy. The inhabitants of Finland, and Swedish Lapland, formerly worshipped an idol whom they called *Iumalac*, and since the reign of *Gustavus Adolphus*, to whom they are indebted for the appellation of Lutherans, they call *Jesus Christ* the son of *Iumalac*. The Muscovite or Russian Laplanders, are at present thought to be of the Greek church; but those who wander about the mountains of the north cape, are satisfied with adoring one God under certain rude forms, as has been the antient custom of all the nations called *Nomades*, or wandering nations.

This race of people, who are inconsiderable in numbers, have but very few ideas, and are happy in not having more, which would only occasion them to have new wants which they could not satisfy: at present they live contented, and free from diseases: notwithstanding the excessive coldness of their climate, they drink no-

thing but water, and attain to a great age. The custom imputed to them of entreating strangers to lie with their wives and daughters, which they esteem as an honour done to them, probably arose from a notion of the superiority of strangers, and a desire of amending, by their means, the defects of their own race. This was a custom established amongst the virtuous Lacedemonians. A husband would entreat, as a favour, of a comely young man, to give him handsome children, whom he might adopt. Jealousy, and the laws, prevent the rest of mankind from giving their wives up to the embraces of another; but the Laplanders have few or no laws, and are, in all probability, strangers to jealousy.

M O S C O W.

Ascending the river Dwina from North to South, we travel up the country till we come to Moscow, the capital of the empire. This city was long the centre of the Russian dominions, before they were extended on the side of China and Persia.

Moscow lying in 55 degrees and an half, north latitude, in a warmer climate, and more fruitful soil than that of Petersbourg, is situated in the midst of a large and delightful plain on the river Moskwa, and two lesser rivers, which with the former lose themselves in the Occa, and afterwards help to swell the stream of the Wolga. This city, in the 13th century, was only a collection of huts, inhabited by a set of miserable wretches, oppressed by the descendants of Gengis Khan.

The

The Kremlin, or antient palace of the great dukes, was not built till the 14th century ; of such modern dates are cities in this part of the world. This palace was built by Italian architects, as were several churches in the Gothic taste, which then prevailed throughout all Europe. There are two built by the famous Aristotle, of Bologna, who flourished in the 15th century ; but the private houses were no better than wooden huts.

The first writer who brought us acquainted with Moscow, was Olearius ; who, in 1633, went thither as the companion of an embassy from the duke of Holstein. A native of Holstein must naturally be struck with wonder at the immense extent of the city of Moscow, with its five quarters, especially the magnificent one belonging to the czars, and with the Asiatic splendor which then reigned at that court. There was nothing equal to it in Germany at that time, nor any city by far so extensive or well peopled.

On the contrary, the Earl of Carlisle, who was Ambassador from Charles II. to the czar Alexis, in 1633, complains in his relation, that he could not meet with any one convenience of life in Moscow ; no inns on the road, nor refreshments of any kind. One judged as a German, the other as an Englishman, and both by comparison. The Englishman was shocked to see most of the Boyards, or Muscovite noblemen, sleep upon boards or benches, with only the skins of animals under them ; but this was the ancient practice of all nations. The houses, which were almost all built of wood, had scarcely any furniture ; few or none of their

tables were covered with cloth; there was no pavement in the streets; nothing agreeable; nothing convenient; very few artificers, and those few extremely awkward, and employed only in works of absolute necessity. These people might have passed for Spartans, had they been sober.

But on public days, the court displays all the splendour of a Persian monarch. The earl says, he could see nothing but gold and precious stones, on the robes of the czar and his courtiers. These dresses were not manufactured in the country; and yet it is evident, that the people might have been rendered industrious long before that time. In the reign of the czar Boris Godonow, the largest bell was cast at Moscow, in Europe; and in the Patriarchal church, there were several ornaments in silver, worked in a very curious manner. These pieces of workmanship, which were made under the direction of Germans and Italians, were only transient efforts. It is daily industry, and the continual exercise of a great number of arts, that makes a nation flourishing. Poland, and the neighbouring nations, were at that time very little superior to the Russians. The handicraft trades were not in greater perfection in the north of Germany, nor were the polite arts much better known, than in the middle of the 17th century.

Tho' the city of Moscow, at that time, had neither the magnificence nor arts of our great cities in Europe, yet its circumference of twenty miles; the part called the Chinese town, where all the rarities of China are exhibited; the spacious quarter of the Kremlin, where stood the
palace

palace of the czars ; the gilded domes, the lofty and conspicuous turrets ; and lastly, the prodigious number of its inhabitants, amounting to near 500,000. All this together, rendered Moscow one of the most considerable cities in the world.

Theodore, or Fœdor, eldest brother to Peter the Great, began to improve Moscow. He ordered several large houses to be built of stone, tho' without any regular architecture. He encouraged the principal persons of his court to build, advancing them sums of money, and furnishing them with materials. He was the first who collected studs of fine horses, and made several useful embellishments. Peter, who was attentive to every thing, did not neglect Moscow at the time he was building Petersbourg ; for he caused it to be paved, adorned it with noble edifices, and enriched it with manufactures ; and within these few years, Mr. de Showalow, high chamberlain to the empress Elizabeth, daughter to Peter the Great, has founded an university in this city. This is the same person who furnished me with the memorials, from which I have compiled the present history, and who was himself much more capable to have done it, even in the French language, had not his great modesty determined him to resign the task to me, as will evidently appear from his own letters on this subject, which I have deposited in the public library of Geneva.

S M O L E N S K O.

Westward of the duchy of Moscow, is that of Smolensko, a part of the ancient Sarmatia Europea. The duchies of Moscow and Smolensko composed what is properly called White Russia. Smolensko, which at first belonged to the great dukes of Russia, was conquered by the great duke of Lithuania, in the beginning of the 15th century, and was retaken one hundred years afterwards by its old masters. Sigismund III. king of Poland, got possession of it in 1611. The czar Alexis, father of Peter I. recovered it again in 1654, since which time it has always constituted part of the Russian empire. The panegyric of Peter the Great, pronounced in the academy of sciences at Paris, takes notice, that before his time the Russians had made no conquests either to the West or South : but this is evidently a mistake.

*Of the Governments of NOVOGOROD and KIOW,
or the UKRAINE.*

Between Petersbourg and Smolensko, lies the province of Novogorod † ; and is said to be the country in which the ancient *Slavi*, or Sclavonians, made their first settlements. But from whence came these *Slavi*, whose language has spread over all the north-east part of Europe ? *Sla* signifies a chief, and *Slave* one belonging to a chief. All that we know concerning these ancient *Slaves*, is, that they were a race of conquerors ; that they built the city of Novogorod the Great, at the head of a navigable river ; and

† Cred or Gorod, signifies city in the Russian language.

that this city was for a long time in possession of a flourishing trade, and was a potent ally to the Hanse towns. Czar Iwan Waffiliawitsch (or John Basilowitz) made a conquest of it in 1467, and carried away all its riches, which contributed to the magnificence of the court of Moscow, till then almost unknown.

To the south of the province of Smolensko, we meet with the province of Kiow, otherwise call'd the Lesser Russia, Red Russia, or the Ukraine, thro' which runs the Dnieper, called by the Greeks the Boristhenes. The difference of these two names, the one so harsh to pronounce, and the other so melodious, serves to shew us, together with an hundred other like instances, the rudeness of all the ancient people of the north, in comparison with the graces of the Greek language. Kiow, the capital city, formerly Kifow, was built by the emperors of Constantinople, who made it a colony: here are still to be seen several Greek inscriptions, upwards of 1200 years old. This is the only city of any antiquity in these countries, where men lived so long together without building walls. Here it was that the great dukes of Russia held their residence in the 11th century, before the Tartars brought it under their subjection.

The inhabitants of the Ukraine, called Cossacks, are a mixture of the ancient Roxolani, Sarmatians, and Tartars, blended together. Rome and Constantinople, tho' so long the mistresses of other nations, are not to compare in fertility of country with the Ukraine. Nature has there exerted her utmost efforts for the service of mankind; but they have not seconded those efforts by industry, living only upon the
spontaneous

spontaneous productions of an uncultivated, but fruitful soil, and the exercise of rapine. Tho' fond, to a degree of enthusiasm, of that most valuable of all blessings, liberty; yet they were always in subjection, either to the Poles or the Turks, till the year 1654, when they threw themselves into the arms of Russia, but with some limitations. At length they were entirely subdued by Peter the Great.

Other nations are divided into cities and towns; this into ten regiments. At the head of which is a chief, who used to be elected by a majority of votes, and is called by the name of Hetman or Itman. This captain of the nation was not invested with supreme power. At present the Itman is a person nominated by the czar, from among the great lords of the court: and is in fact, no more than the governor of the province, like governors of the *Pays d'Etats* in France, that have retained some privileges.

At first the inhabitants of this country were all either Pagans or Mahometans; but when they entered into the service of Poland, they were baptised Christians of the Roman communion; and now that they are in the service of Russia, they belong to the Greek church.

Amongst these are comprehended the Zaporavian Cossacks, who are much the same as our Buccaneers or Free-booters, living upon rapine. They are distinguished from all other people, by never admitting women to live among them; as the Amazons are said never to have admitted any man. The women whom they make use of for propagation, live upon other islands on the river; they have no marriages amongst them, nor any domestic œconomy; they inroll
the

the male children in their militia, and leave the girls to the care of their mothers. A brother has frequently children by his sister, and a father by his daughter. They know no other laws than customs introduced by necessity: however, they make use of some prayers from the Greek ritual. Fort St. Elizabeth has been lately built on the Boristhenes, to keep them in awe. They serve as irregulars in the Russian armies, and hapless is the fate of those who fall into their hands.

*Of the Governments of BELGOROD, WORONITZ,
and NISCHGOROD.*

To the north-east of the province of Kiow, between the Boristhenes and the Tanais, or Don, is the government of Belgorod, which is as large as that of Kiow. This is one of the most fruitful provinces of Russia, and furnishes Poland with a prodigious number of that large cattle, known by the name of Ukrain oxen. These two provinces are secured from the incursions of the petty Tartar tribes, by lines extending from the Boristhenes to the Tanais, and well furnished with forts and redoubts.

Farther north we cross the Tanais, and come into the government of Worownitz or Veronise, which extends as far as the banks of the Palus Mæotis. In the neighbourhood of the capital of this province, which is called by the Russians, Woronesteh, at the mouth of the river of the same name, which falls into the Don, Peter the Great built his first fleet; an undertaking which was at that time entirely new to the inhabitants of these vast dominions.

From

From thence we come to the government of Nischgorod, abounding with grain, and watered by the river Wolga.

A S T R A C A N.

From the latter province we proceed southward to the kingdom of Astracan. This country reaches from 43 1-half degrees north latitude (in a most delightful climate) to near 50, including about as many degrees of longitude as of latitude. It is bounded on one side by the Caspian sea, and on the other by the mountains of Circassia, projecting beyond the Caspian, along mount Caucasus. It was watered by the great river Wolga, the Jaick, and several other lesser streams, between which, according to Mr. Perry, the English engineer, canals might be cut that would serve as reservoirs to receive the overflowing of the waters; and by that means answer the same purposes as the canals of the Nile, and make the soil more fruitful: but to the right and left of the Wolga and Jaick, this fine country was inhabited, or rather infested, by Tartars, who never apply themselves to agriculture, but have always lived as strangers and sojourners upou the face of the earth.

The above-named engineer Perry, who was employed by Péter the Great in these parts, found a vast track of land covered with pasture, leguminous plants, cherry and almond trees, and large flocks of wild sheep, who fed in these solitary places, and who fesh was excellent. The inhabitants of these countries must be conquered and civilized, in order to second the efforts

forts of nature, who has been forced in the climate of Peterbourg.

The kingdom of Astracan is a part of the ancient Capshak, conquered by Gengis-Khan, and afterwards by Tamerlane, whose dominion extended as far as Moscow. The czar John Basilides, grandson of John Basilowitz, and the greatest conqueror of all the Russian princes, delivered his country from the Tartarian yoke, in the 16th century, and added the kingdom of Astracan to his other conquests in 1554.

Astracan is the boundary of Asia and Europe, and is so situated as to be able to carry on a trade with both, as merchandises may be conveyed from the Caspian sea, up to this town, by means of the Wolga. This was one of the grand schemes of Peter the Great, and has been partly carried into execution. An entire suburb of Astracan is inhabited by Indians.

O R E M B O U R G.

To the south-east of the kingdom of Astracan, is a small country newly planted, called Orembourg. The town of this name was built in the year 1734, on the banks of the river Jaick. This province is thickly covered with hills, that are parts of mount Caucasus. The passes in these mountains, and of the rivers that run down from them, are defended by forts raised at equal distances. In this region, formerly uninhabited, the Persians come at present, to hide from the rapacity of robbers, such of their effects as have escaped the fury of the civil wars. The city of Orembourg is become the asylum of the Persians and their riches, and is grown

grown considerable by their calamities. The natives of Great Bukari come hither to trade, so that it is become the mart of Asia.

Of the Government of CASAN, and of GREAT PERMIA.

Beyond the Wolga and Jaick, towards the north, lies the kingdom of Casan, which, like that of Astracan, fell by partition to one of the sons of Gengis-Khan, afterwards to a son of Tamerlane, and was at length conquered by John Basilides. It is still inhabited by a number of Mahometan Tartars. This vast country stretches as far as Siberia; it is allowed to have been formerly very flourishing and rich, and still retains some part of its pristine opulence. A province of this kingdom, called Great Permia, and since Solikam, was the staple for the merchandises of Persia, and the furs of Tartary. There has been found in Permia a great quantity of the coin of the first caliphs, and some Tartarian idols, made of gold*; but these monuments of ancient opulence were found in the midst of barren deserts and extreme poverty, where there were not the least traces of commerce: revolutions of this nature may easily happen to a barren country, seeing they are so soon brought about in the most fruitful provinces.

The famous Swedish prisoner Strahlemberg, who made such advantageous use of his misfortunes, and who examined those extensive countries with so much attention, was the first who

* Memoirs of Strahlemberg, confirmed by those sent me from Russia.

gave an air of probability to a fact, which before had been always though incredible ; namely, concerning the ancient commerce of these provinces. Pliny and Pomponius-Mela relate, that, in the reign of Augustus, a king of the Suevi made a present to Metellus Celer of some Indians who had been cast by a storm upon the coasts bordering on the Elbe. But how could inhabitants of India navigate the Germanic seas ? This adventure was deemed fabulous by all our moderns, especially after the change made in the commerce of our hemisphere, by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. But formerly it was no more extraordinary to see an Indian trading to the parts to the north-west of his country, that to see a Roman go from India by the way of Arabia. The Indians went to Persia, and thence embarked on the Hyrcanian sea, and ascending the Rha, now the Wolga, get to Great Permia thro' the river Kama ; from whence they might take shipping again on the Black Sea, or the Baltick. There have, in all times, been enterprising men. The Tyrians undertook most surprising voyages.

If, after surveying all these vast provinces, we direct our view towards the east, we shall find the limits of Europe and Asia again confounded. A new name is wanting for this considerable part of the globe. The ancients divided their known world into Europe, Asia, and Africa ; but they had not seen the tenth part of it : hence it happens, that when we pass the Palus Mæotis, we are at a loss to know where Europe ends, or Asia begins ; all that tract of country lying beyond mount Taurus was distinguished by the general appellation of Scythia, and afterwards by that

that of Tartary. It might not be improper, perhaps, to give the name of *Terræ Arcticæ*, of Northern Lands, to the country extending from the Baltic sea to the confines of China; as that of *Terræ Australes*, or Southern Lands, are to that equally extensive part of the world, situated under the Antarctic Pole, and which serves to counterpoise the globe.

Of the Governments of SIBERIA, of the SAMOJEDES, the OSTIAKS, KAMTSHATKA, &c.

Siberia, with the territories beyond it, extends from the frontiers of the provinces of Archangel, Resan, and Astracan, eastward as far as the sea of Japan: it joined the southern parts of Russia by mount Caucasus; from thence, to the country of Kamtshatka, is about 1200 computed French leagues; and from southern Tartary, which serves as its boundary to the Frozen sea, about 400, which is the least breadth of the Russian empire. This country produces the richest furs; and this occasioned the discovery of it in the year 1563.

In the 16th century, in the reign of the czar John Basilides, and not in that of Fœder Johannowitz, a private person in the neighbourhood of Archangel, named Anika, one tolerably rich for his condition of life and country, took notice, that certain men of an extraordinary figure, and dressed in a manner unknown to that country, and who spoke a language understood by no one but themselves, came every year down a river which falls into the Dwina*,

* Memoirs sent from Petersbourg.

and brought martens and black foxes, which they trucked for nails and pieces of glass ; just as the first savages of America used to exchange their gold with the Spaniards : he caused them to be followed by his sons and servants, as far as their own country. These were the Samojedes, a people who seem to resemble the Laplanders, but are of a different race. They are, like that people, unacquainted with the use of bread ; and like them, they yoke rein deer to draw their sledges. They live in caverns and huts, amidst the snow* ; but in other respects, nature has made a visible difference between this species of men and the Laplanders. Their upper jaw projects forward, so as to be on a level with their nose, and their ears are placed higher. Both the men and women have no hair in any other part of their bodies but their heads ; and their nipple is of a deep black, like ebony. The Lapland men and women are distinguished by no such marks. By memoirs sent from these countries so little known, I have been informed, that the author of the curious natural history of the king's garden, is mistaken, where, in speaking of the many curiosities in human nature, he confounds the Lapland race with that of the Samojedes. There are many more different species of men than is commonly thought. The Samojedes and the Hottentots, seem to be the two extremes of our continent ; and if we observe the black nipples of the Samojedian women, and the apron with which nature has furnished the Hottentot females, and which hangs half way down their thighs, we may have some idea of the great variety of our animal species,

* Idem.

a variety

a variety unknown to those inhabiting great cities, who are generally strangers to almost every thing that is not immediately within their view.

The Samojedes are as singular in their moral as in their physical distinctions; they pay no worship to the supreme being; they border upon Manicheism, or rather upon the religion of the ancient Magi in this one point, that they acknowledge a good and an evil principle. The horrible climate they inhabit may in some measure excuse this belief, which is of such ancient date, and so naturally to those who are ignorant and unhappy.

Theft or murder is never heard of amongst them: being in a manner devoid of passions, they are strangers to injustice; they have no terms in their language to denote vice and virtue, their extreme simplicity has not yet permitted them to form abstract ideas, they are wholly guided by sensation; and this is perhaps an incontestible proof that men naturally love justice, when not blinded by inordinate passions.

Some of these savages were prevailed on to suffer themselves to be carried to Moscow, where many things they saw struck them with admiration. They gazed upon the Emperor as their God, and voluntarily engaged for themselves and countrymen a present of two martens or fables every year for each inhabitant. Colonies were soon settled beyond the Oby *, and the
Irtis,

* Called also the Ob. This large river issues from the lake Altin in Calmuck Tartary in Asia, from whence running north it forms the boundary between Europe and Asia, and
after

Irtis †, and some forts built. In the year 1595 a Cossack officer was sent into this country, who conquered it for the Czar with only a few soldiers and some artillery, as Cortez did Mexico; but he only made a conquest of barren deserts.

In sailing up the Oby to the junction of the river Irtis with the Tobol, they found a petty settlement, which they converted into the town of Tobol ‡, now the capital of Siberia, and a considerable place. Who could imagine that this country was for a long time the residence of those very Huns, who under Attila carried their depredations as far as the gates of Rome, and that these Huns came from the north of China? The Usbeck Tartars succeeded the Huns, and the Russians the Usbecks. The possession of these savage countries has been disputed with as much murderous fury, as that of the most fruitful provinces. Siberia was formerly better peopled than it is at present, especially towards the southern parts; if we may judge from the rivers and sepulchral monuments.

All this part of the world, from the 60th deg. of lat. or thereabouts, as far as those mountains of perpetual ice which border the north seas, is totally different from the regions of the temperate zone; the earth produces neither the same plants, nor the same animals, nor are there

after traversing a vast tract of above 2000 miles, it falls into a bay of the Frozen Sea.

† In the Russian language Irtish. This river runs from N. to S. thro' all Russia, and falling into the former river, forms part of the boundary between Asia and Europe.

‡ In the Russian language Tobolskoy.

the

the same sort of fishes in their lakes and rivers.

Below the country of the Samojedes lies that of the Ostiaks, along the river Oby. These people have no resemblance in any respect with the Samojedes, save that like them and all the first race of men they are hunters, fishermen, and shepherds; some of them have no religion, not being formed into any society, and the others who live together in herds or clans, have a kind of worship, and pray to the principal object of their wants; they adore the skin of a sheep, because this creature is of all others the most serviceable to them; just as the Egyptian husbandmen made choice of an ox, as an emblem of the Deity who created that creature for the use of man.

The Ostiaks have likewise other idols, whose origin and worship are as little deserving our notice as their worshippers. There were some converts to Christianity made amongst them in the year 1712; but these, like the lowest of our peasants, are Christians without knowing what they profess. Several writers pretend that these people were natives of Great Permia, but as Great Permia is in a manner a desert, how comes it then its inhabitants should settle themselves at such a distance, and so inconveniently? This is a difficulty not worth clearing up. Every nation which has not cultivated the polite arts, deserves to remain in obscurity.

In the country of the Ostiaks in particular, and amongst their neighbours the Burates and Jakutians, they often discover a kind of ivory under ground, the nature of which is as yet unknown. Some take it to be a sort of fossil, and others the tooth of a species of elephants, the
breed

breed of which have been destroyed : but where is the country that does not afford some natural productions, which at once astonish and confound philosophy ?

Several mountains in this country abound with the amianthes or asbestos, a kind of incombustible flax, of which a sort of cloth and paper is sometimes made.

To the south of the Ostiaks are the Burates, another people, who have not yet been made christians. Eastward there are several hords, whom the Russians have not as yet entirely subdued.

None of these people have the least knowledge of the kalendar. They reckon their time by snows, and not by the apparent motion of the sun : as it snows regularly, and for a long time every winter, they say, ' I am so many snows old,' just as we say, I am so many years.

And here I must relate the accounts given by the Swedish officer Strahlenberg, who was taken prisoner in the battle of Pultowa, and lived fifteen years in Siberia, and made the entire tour of that country. He says, that there are still some remains of an ancient people, whose skin is spotted or variegated with different colours, and that he himself had seen some of them : and the fact has been confirmed to me by Russians born at Tobolsky. The variety of the human species seems to be greatly diminished, as we find very few of these extraordinary people, and they have probably been exterminated by some other race : for instance, there are very few Albinos, or White Moors ; one of them was presented to the academy of sciences at Paris, which I saw. It is the same with re-
D spect

spect to several other species of animals which are rare.

As to the Borandians, of whom mention is made so frequently in the learned history of the king's garden, my memoirs say, that this race of people is entirely unknown to the Russians.

All the southern part of these countries is peopled by numerous hords of Tartars. The ancient Turks came from this part of Tartary to conquer these extensive countries, of which they are at present in possession. The Calmucks and Monguls are the very Scythians who, under Madies, made themselves masters of Upper Asia, and conquered Cyaxares king of the Medes. They are the men, whom Gengis Khan and his sons led afterwards as far as Germany, and was termed the Mogul empire under Tamerlane. These people afford a lively instance of the vicissitudes which have happened to all nations; some of their hords, far from being formidable now, are become vassals to Russia.

Among these is a nation of Calmucks, dwelling between Siberia and the Caspian Sea, where, in the year 1720, there was discovered a subterraneous house of stone, with urns, lamps, earrings, an equestrian statue of an oriental prince, with a diadem on his head, two women seated on thrones, and a roll of manuscripts, which were sent by Peter the Great to the academy of inscriptions at Paris, and proved to be written in the Thibet language: all these are striking proofs, that the liberal arts formerly resided in this now barbarous country, and are lasting evidences of the truth of what Peter the Great was wont several times to say, viz. that the arts had made the tour of the globe.

The

The last province is Kamtschatka, the most eastern part of the continent. The inhabitants were absolutely void of all religion when they were first discovered. The north part of this country likewise affords fine furs, with which the inhabitants cloathed themselves in winter, though they went naked all the summer season. The first discoverers were surpris'd to find in the southern parts men with long beards, while in the northern parts, from the country of the Samoje-des, as far as the mouth of the river Amur, they have no more beards than the Americans. Thus, in the empire of Russia, there is a greater number of different species, more singularities, and a greater diversity of manners and customs, than in any country in the known world.

The first discovery of this country was made by a Cossack officer, who went by land from Siberia to Kamtschatka in 1701, by order of Peter the Great, who, notwithstanding his misfortune at Narva, still continued to extend his care from one extremity of the continent to the other. Afterwards, in 1725, some time before death surpris'd him, in the midst of his great exploits, he sent captain Bering, a Dane, with express orders to find out, if possible, a passage by the sea of Kamtschatka, to the coast of America. Bering did not succeed in his first attempt; but the empress Anne sent him out again in 1733. M. Spengenberg, captain of a ship, his associate in this voyage, set out the first from Kamtschatka, but could not put to sea till the year 1739, so much time was taken up in getting to the port where they were to embark, in building and fitting out the ships, and providing the necessaries. Spengenberg failed as far as the

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north

north part of Japan, through a freight, formed by a long chain of islands, and returned without having discovered the passage.

In 1741, Bering cruised all over this sea, in company with De Lisle de la Croyere, the astronomer, of the same family of Lisle, which has produced such excellent geographers: another captain likewise went upon the same discovery. They both made the coast of America, to the northward of California. Thus the north-east passage, so long sought after, was at length discovered, but there was no refreshments to be met with on those barren coasts. Their fresh water failed them, and part of the crew perished with the scurvy. They saw the northern bank of California for above an hundred miles, and saw some leathern canoes, with just such a sort of people in them as the Canadians. All their endeavours, however, proved fruitless: Bering ended his life in an island, to which he gave his name. The other captain happening to be closer in with the Californian coast, sent ten of his people on shore, who never returned. The captain, after waiting for them in vain, found himself obliged to return back to Kamtschatka, and De Lisle died as he was going on shore. Such are the disasters that have generally attended every new attempt upon the northern seas. But what advantages may yet arise from these powerful and dangerous discoveries, time alone can discover.

We have now described all the different provinces that compose the Russian dominions, from Finland to the sea of Japan. The largest parts of this empire have been all united at different times, as has been the case in all other king-

kingdoms in the world. The Scythians, Huns, Massagates, Slavians, Cimbrians, Getes, and Sarmatians, are now subjects of the Czar. The Russians, properly so called, are the ancient Roxolani or Slavi.

Upon reflection, we shall find that most states were formed in the same manner. The French are an assemblage of Goths, of Danes called Normands, of northern Germans, called Burgundians : of Franks, Allmans, and some Romans mixed with the ancient Celtæ. In Rome and Italy there are several families descended from the people of the North, but none that we know of from the ancient Romans. The supreme pontiff is frequently the offspring of a Lombard, a Goth, a Teuton, or a Cimbrian. The Spaniards are a race of Arabs, Carthaginians, Jews, Tyrians, Visigoths, and Vandals, incorporated with the ancient inhabitants of the country. When nations are thus intermixed, it is a long time before they are civilized, or even before their language is formed. Some indeed receive these sooner, others latter. Polity and the liberal arts are so difficult to establish, and the new raised structure is so often destroyed by revolutions, that we may wonder all nations are not so barbarous as Tartars.

C H A P. II.

Continuation of the description of Russia, population, finances, armies, customs, religion, state of Russia before Peter the Great.

THE more civilized a country is, the better it is peopled. Thus China and India are more populous than any other empires, because, after a multitude of revolutions, which changed the face of sublunary affairs, these two nations made the earliest establishments in civil society: the antiquity of their government, which has subsisted upwards of four thousand years, supposes, as we have already observed, many essays and efforts in preceding ages. The Russians came very late; but the arts having been introduced amongst them in their full perfection, it has happened, that they have made more progress in fifty years, than any other nation had done before them in five hundred. The country is far from being populous, in proportion to its extent; but such as it is, it has as great a number of inhabitants as any other state in Christendom. From the capitation lists, and the register of merchants, artificers, and male peasants, I might safely assert, that Russia, at present, contains at least 24 millions of male inhabitants: of these 24 millions, the greatest part are villains or bondmen, as in Poland, several provinces of Germany, and formerly throughout all Europe. The estate of a gentleman in Russia and Poland is computed, not by his income in money, but by the number of his slaves.

The

RUSSIAN EMPIRE. 35

The following is a list taken in 1747, of all the males who paid the capitation or poll-tax.

Merchants or tradesmen	-	198000
Handicrafts	-	16500
Peasants incorporated with the merchants and handicrafts.	-	1950
Peasants called Odonoskis, who contribute to maintain the militia	-	430220
Others who do not contribute thereto	-	26080
Workmen of different trades, whose parents are not known	-	1000
Others who are not incorporated with the companies of tradesmen	-	4700
Peasants immediately dependent on the crown, about	-	555000
Persons employed in the mines belonging to the crown, partly Christians, partly Mahometans and Pagans	-	64000
Other peasants belonging to the crown, who work in the mines, and in private manufactures	-	24200
New converts to the Greek church	-	57000
Tartars and Ostiaks (peasants)	-	241000
Mourfes, Tartars, Mordauts, and others, whether Pagans or Christians, employed by the admiralty	-	7800
Tartars subject to contribution, called Tepteris, Bobilitz, &c.	-	28900
Bondmen to several merchants, and other privileged persons, who, tho' not landholders, are allowed to have slaves	-	9100
Carried over		1665450
D 4		Pea-

	Brought over	1665450
Peasants in the lands set apart for the support of the crown	-	418000
Peasants on the lands belonging to her majesty, independently of the rights of the crown	-	60500
Peasants on the lands confiscated to the crown	-	13600
Bondmen belonging to gentlemen		3550000
Bondmen belonging to the assembly of the clergy, and who defray other expences	-	37500
Bondmen belonging to bishops	-	116400
Bondmen belonging to convents whose numbers were reduced by Peter the Great	-	721500
Bondmen belonging to cathedral and parish churches	-	23700
Peasants employed as labourers in the docks of the admiralty, or in other public works, about		4000
Labourers in the mines, and in private manufactures	-	16000
Peasants on the lands assigned to the principal manufactures	-	14500
Labourers in the mines belonging to the crown	-	300
Bastards brought up by the clergy	-	40
Sectaries called Raskolniky	-	2200
		6646390

Here we have a round number of six millions six hundred forty-six thousand three hundred and ninety male persons, who pay the poll-tax. In this number are included boys and old men, but

but girls and women are not reckoned, nor boys born between the making of one register of the lands and another. Now, if we only reckon triple the number of heads subject to be taxed, including women and girls, we shall find near 20 millions of souls.

To this number we may add the military list, which amounts to 350,000 men. Besides, neither the nobility or clergy, who are computed at 200,000, are subject to this capitation.

Foreigners, of whatever country or profession, are likewise exempt: as also the inhabitants of the conquered countries, namely, Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, Carelia, and a part of Finland, the Ukraine, and the Don Cossacks, the Calmucks, and other Tartars, Samojedes, the Laplanders, the Ostiaks, and all the idolatrous people of Siberia, a country of greater extent than China, are not included in this list.

By the same calculation, it is impossible that the total of the inhabitants of Russia should amount to less than 24 millions. At this rate, there are eight persons to every square mile. The English ambassador, whom I have mentioned before, allows only five; but he certainly was not furnished with such faithful memoirs as those with which I have been favoured.

Russia therefore is exactly five times less populous than Spain, but contains near four times the number of inhabitants: it is almost as populous as France or Germany: but if we consider its vast extent, the number of souls is thirty times less.

There is one important remark to be made in regard to this enumeration, namely, that out of 6,640,000 people liable to the poll-tax, there

are about 900,000 that belong to the Russian clergy, without reckoning either the ecclesiastics of the conquered countries, of the Ukraine, or of Siberia.

Therefore, out of seven persons liable to the poll-tax, the clergy have one; but nevertheless they are far from possessing the seventh part of the whole revenues of the state, as is the case in many other kingdoms, where they have at least a seventh of all estates: for their peasants pay a capitation to the sovereign; and the other taxes of the crown of Russia, in which the clergy have no share, are very considerable.

This valuation is very different from that of all other writers on the affairs of Russia; so that foreign ministers, who have transmitted memoirs of this state to their courts, have been greatly mistaken. The archives of the empire are the only things to be consulted.

It is very probable, that Russia has been better peopled than it is at present; before the small-pox, that came from the extremities of Arabia, and the great pox that came from America, had spread over these climates, where they have now taken root. The world owes these two dreadful scourges, which have depopulated it more than all its wars, the one to Mahomet, and the other to Christopher Columbus. The plague, which is a native of Africa, seldom approached the countries of the north. Besides, the people of those countries, from Sarmatia to the Tartars who dwell beyond the great wall, having overspread the world by their irruptions, this ancient nursery of the human species must have been surprisingly diminished.

In this vast extent of country, there are said to be about 7400 monks, and 5000 nuns, notwithstanding the care taken by Peter the Great to reduce their number ; a care worthy the legislator of an empire, where the human race is so remarkably deficient. These 13,000 persons, thus immured and lost to the state, have (as the reader may have observed) 72,000 bondmen to till their lands, which is evidently too great a number ; there cannot be a stronger proof how difficult it is to eradicate abuses of long standing.

I find, by a list of the revenues of the empire in 1735, that reckoning the tribute paid by the Tartars, with all taxes and duties in money, the sum total amounted to 13 millions of rubles, which make 65 millions of French livres, exclusive of tributes in kind. This moderate sum was at that time sufficient to maintain 339,500, as well sea as land forces : but both the revenues and troops are augmented since that time.

The customs, diets, and manners of the Russians, ever bore a greater affinity to those of Asia than to those of Europe : such was the old custom of receiving tributes in kind, of defraying the expences of ambassadors on their journies, and during their residence in the country, and of never appearing at church, or in the royal presence with a sword ; an oriental custom, directly the reverse of that ridiculous and barbarous one amongst us, of addressing ourselves to God, to our king, to our friends, and to our women, with an offensive weapon, which hangs down to the bottom of the leg. The long robe worn on public days, had a more noble air than the short habits of the western nations of Europe. A vest lined and turned up with fur, with
D. 6. a long

a long scymitar, adorned with jewels for festival days ; and those high turbans, which add to the stature, were much more striking to the eye ; than our perukes and close coats, and more suitable to cold climates : but this ancient dress of all nations seems to be not so well contrived for war, nor so convenient for working people. Most of their other customs were rustic : but we must not imagine, that their manners were as barbarous as some writers would have us believe. Albert Krants relates a story of an Italian ambassador, whom the czar ordered to have his hat nailed to his head, for not pulling it off while he was making his speech to him. Others attribute this adventure to a Tartar, and others again to a French ambassador.

Olearius pretends, that the czar Michael Theodorowitz, banished the marquis of Exideül, ambassador from Henry IV. of France, into Siberia ; but it is certain, that this monarch sent no ambassador to Moscow, and that there never was a marquis of Exideül in France. In the same manner do travellers speak about the country of Borandia, and of the trade they have carried on with the people of Nova Zembla, which is scarcely inhabited at all, and the long conversations they have had with some of the Samojedes, as if they understood their language. Were the enormous compilations of voyages to be cleared of every thing that is not true nor useful in them, both the works and the public would be gainers by it.

The Russian government resembled that of the Turks, in respect to the standing forces, or guards, called Strelitzes, who, like the janissaries, sometimes disposed of the crown, and frequently

frequently disturbed the state as much as they defended it. Their number was about 40,000. Those who were dispersed in the provinces, subsisted by rapine and plunder; those in Moscow lived like citizens, followed trades, did no duty, and carried their insolence to the greatest excess: in short, there was no other way to preserve peace and good order in the kingdom, but by breaking them; a very necessary, and at the same time a very dangerous step.

The public revenue does not exceed five millions of rubles, or about 25 millions of French livres. This was sufficient when czar Peter came to the crown to maintain the ancient mediocrity, but was not a third part of what was necessary to go certain lengths, and to render himself and people considerable in Europe: but at the same time many of their taxes were paid in kind, according to the Turkish custom, which is less burthensome to the people than that of paying their tributes in money.

Of the Title of CZAR.

As to the title of czar, it may possibly come from the Tzars or Tchars of the kingdom of Casan. When John, or Ivan Basilides, completed the conquest of this kingdom in the 16th century, which had been begun by his grandfather, who afterwards lost it, he assumed this title, which his successors have retained ever since. Before John Basilides, the sovereign of Russia, took the title of *Welike Knez*, i. e. *Great prince, great lord, great chief*; which the christian nations afterwards rendered by that of great duke. Czar Michael Theodorowitz, when he received

received the Holstein embassy, took to himself the following titles: "Great *knez*, and great "lord, conservator of all the Russias, prince of "Wolodomer, Moscow, Novogorod, &c. "tzar of Casan, tzar of Astracan, and tzar of "Siberia." *Tzar* was, therefore, a title belonging to these eastern princes; and, therefore, it is more probable to have been derived from the *Tshas* of Persia, than from the Roman Cæsars, whom the Siberian Tzars, on the banks of the Oby, can hardly be supposed to have ever heard.

No title, however pompous, is of any consequence, if those who bear it are not great and powerful of themselves. The word *emperor*, which originally signified no more than *general of the army*, became the title of the sovereign of the Roman republic: it is now given to the supreme governor of all the Russias, more justly than to any other potentate, if we consider the power and extant of his dominions.

RELIGION.

The established religion of this country, has ever since the 11th century been that of the Greek church, so called in opposition to the Latin: tho' there were always a greater number of Mahometan and Pagan provinces, than of those inhabited by christians. Siberia, as far as China, was in a state of idolatry; and in some of the provinces, they were utter strangers to all kind of religion.

Perry, the engineer, and baron Strahlemburg, who both resided so many years in Russia, tell us, that they found more sincerity and probity
among

among the Pagans, than the other inhabitants; not that paganism made them more virtuous, but their manner of living, which was that of the primitive ages, as they are called, freed them from all the tumultuous passions; and, in consequence, they were known for their integrity.

Christianity did not get footing in Russia, and the other countries of the North, till very late. It is said that a princess, named Olha, first introduced it, about the end of the 10th century, as Clotilda, niece to an Arian prince, did among the Franks; the wife of Miceslaus, duke of Poland, among the Poles; and the sister of the emperor Henry II. among the Hungarians. Women are naturally easily persuaded by the ministers of religion, and as easily persuade the other part of mankind.

It is further added, that this princess Olha caused herself to be baptised at Constantinople, by the name of Helena; and that as soon as she embraced christianity, the emperor John Zimisces fell in love with her. It is most likely that she was a widow; however, she refused the emperor. The example of the princess Olha, or Olga, as she is called, did not at first make any great number of proselytes. Her son*, who reigned a long time, was not of the same way of thinking as his mother: but her grandson Woldomer, who was born of a concubine, having murdered his brother and mounted the throne, sued for the alliance of Basiles, emperor of Constantinople, but could obtain it only on condition of receiving baptism: and this event, which happened in the year 987, is the epocha

* His name was Sowaſtowſlaw.

when

when the Greek church was first established in Russia. Photius, the patriarch, so famous for his immense erudition, his disputes with the church of Rome, and for his misfortunes, sent a person to baptise Wolodomer, in order to add this part of the world to the Patriarchal See *.

Wolodomer, or Wolodomar, therefore completed the work which his grandmother had begun. A Greek was made the first Metropolitan, or Patriarch of Russia: and from this time, the Russians adopted an alphabet, taken partly from the Greek. This would have been of advantage to them, had they not still retained the principles of their own language, which is the Sclavonian in every thing, but a few terms relating to their liturgy and church government. One of the Greek patriarchs, named Jeremiah, having a suit depending before the Divan, came to Moscow to solicit it; where, after some time he resigned his authority over the Russian churches, and consecrated patriarch, the archbishop of Novogorod, named Job. This was in the year 1588, from which time the Russian church became as independent as its empire. The patriarch of Russia has ever since been consecrated by the Russian bishops, and not by the patriarch of Constantinople. He ranked in the Greek church next to the patriarch of Jerusalem, but he was in fact the only free and powerful patriarch; and consequently, the only real one. Those of Jerusalem, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, are mercenary chiefs of a

* This anecdote is taken from a private MS. intitled, "The Ecclesiastical Government of Russia," which is likewise deposited in the public library.

church, enslaved by the Turks : and even the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch are no longer considered as such, having no more credit or influence in Turkey, than the rabbins of the Jewish synagogues settled there.

It was from a person who was patriarch of all the Russias, that Peter the Great was descended in a direct line. These new prelates soon wanted to share the sovereign authority with the czars. They thought it not enough that their prince walked bare-headed once a year before the patriarch, leading his horse by the bridle. These external marks of respect only served to encrease their thirst for rule ; a passion which proved the source of great troubles in Russia, as well as in other countries.

Nicon, a person whom the monks look upon as a saint, and who was patriarch in the reign of Alexis, the father of Peter the Great, wanted to raise his dignity above that of the throne ; for he not only assumed the privilege of sitting by the side of the czar in the senate, but pretended that neither war nor peace could be made without his consent. His authority was so great, that being supported by his immense wealth, and by his intrigues with the clergy and the people, he kept his master in a kind of subjection. He had the boldness to excommunicate some senators who opposed his excessive insolence ; till at length, Alexis finding himself not powerful enough to depose him by his own authority, was obliged to convene a synod of all the bishops. There the patriarch was accused of having received money from the Poles ; and being convicted, was deposed and confined for the remainder of his days in a monastery, after which
the

the prelates chose another patriarch in his stead.

From the first infancy of christianity in Russia, there have been several sects there, as well as in other countries; for sects are as frequently the fruits of ignorance, as of pretended knowledge: but Russia is the only christian state of any considerable extent, in which religion has not excited civil wars, tho' it has felt some occasional tumults.

The Raskolnikys, who consist at present of about 2000 males, and who are mentioned in the foregoing list *, are the most ancient sect of any in this country. It was established in the 12th century, by some enthusiasts, who had a superficial knowledge of the New Testament: they made use then, and still do, of the old pretence of the sectaries, that of following the letter, and accused all other christians of remissness. They would not permit a priest, who had drank brandy, to confer baptism; they affirmed, in the words of our Saviour, that there is neither a first nor a last, among the faithful; and held, that one of the elect might kill himself for the love of his Saviour. According to them, it is a great sin to repeat the halleluja three times; and, therefore, repeat it only twice. The benediction is to be given only with three fingers. In other respects, no society can be more regular or strict in its morals. They live like the quakers, and, like them, do not admit any other christians into their assemblies, which is the reason that these have accused them of all the abominations of which the heathens accused the primitive Galileans; these latter, the Gnostics, and

* See Page 36.

with which the Roman Catholics have charged the Protestants. They have been frequently accused of cutting the throat of an infant, and drinking its blood ; and of mixing together in their private ceremonies, without distinction of kindred, age, or even of sex. They have been persecuted at times, and then they shut themselves up in their hamlets, set fire to their houses, and thrown themselves into the flames. Peter took the only method of reclaiming them, which was by letting them live in peace.

But to conclude in all this vast empire, there are but 28 episcopal sees ; and in Peter's time, there were but 22. This small number was, perhaps, one of the causes to which the Russian church owes its tranquillity. So very circumscribed was the knowledge of the clergy, that czar Theodore, brother to Peter the Great, was the first who introduced the custom of singing psalms in churches.

Theodore and Peter, especially the latter, admitted indifferently in their councils and their armies, those of the Greek, the Latin, the Lutheran, and the Calvinist communion, leaving every one at liberty to serve God after his own conscience, provided he did his duty to the state. At that time, there was not one Latin church in this great empire of 2000 leagues, till Peter established some new manufactures at Astracan, where there were about sixty Roman Catholic families, under the direction of the capuchins ; but the jesuits endeavouring to establish themselves in his dominions, he drove them out by an edict, published in the month of April 1718. He tolerated the capuchins as an insignificant set

set of monks, but considered the jesuits as dangerous politicians.

The Greek church has at once the honour and satisfaction to see its communion extended throughout an empire of 2000 leagues in length, while that of Rome is not in possession of half that tract in Europe. Those of the Greek communion have, at all times, been particularly attentive to maintain an equality between theirs and the Latin church; and always upon their guard against the zeal of the see of Rome, which they look upon as ambition; because, in fact, that church whose power is very much circumscribed in our hemisphere, and yet assumes the title of *universal*, has always endeavoured to act up to that title.

The Jews never made any settlements in Russia, as they have done in most of the other states of Europe, from Constantinople to Rome. The Russians have carried on their trade by themselves, or by the help of the nations settled amongst them. Their's is the only country of the Greek communion, where synagogues are not seen by the side of christian temples.

Conclusion of the State of RUSSIA, before PETER the GREAT.

Russia is indebted solely to czar Peter for its great influence in the affairs of Europe; being of no consideration in any other reign, since it embraced christianity. Before this period, the Russians made the same figure on the Black Sea, that the Normans did afterwards on the coasts of the ocean. In the reign of the emperor Heraclius, they fitted out an armament of

40,000

20,000 small barks, appeared before Constantinople, which they besieged, and imposed a tribute on the Greek emperors; but the grand knez Wolodomar, being wholly taken up with the care of establishing christianity in his dominions, and wearied out with intestine broils in his own family, weakened his dominions by dividing them between his children. They almost all fell a prey to the Tartars, who held Russia in subjection near two hundred years. At length John Basilides freed it from slavery, and enlarged its boundaries; but after his time, it was ruined again by civil wars.

Before the time of Peter the Great, Russia was neither so powerful, so well cultivated, so populous, nor so rich as at present. It had no possessions in Finland, nor in Livonia: and this latter alone had been long worth more than all Siberia. The Cossacks were still unsubjected, nor were the people of Astracan reduced to obedience; what little trade was carried on, was rather to their disadvantage. The White Sea, the Baltic, the Pontus Euxinus, the sea of Asoph, and the Caspian sea, were entirely useless to a nation that had not a single ship, nor even a term in their language to express a fleet. If nothing more had been wanting but to be superior to the Tartars, and the other nations of the north, as far as China, the Russians undoubtedly had that advantage, but they were to be brought upon an equality with civilized nations, and to be in a condition one day of even surpassing several of them. Such an undertaking appeared altogether impracticable, inasmuch as they had not a single ship at sea, and were absolutely ignorant of military discipline by land; nay, the
most

most common manufactures were hardly encouraged, and that agriculture itself, the primum mobile of trade, was neglected. This requires the utmost attention and encouragement on the part of a government ; and it is to this the English are indebted, for finding in their corn a treasure far superior to their woollen manufacture.

This gross neglect of the necessary arts, sufficiently shews, that the people of Russia had no idea of the polite arts, which become necessary in their turn, when we have cultivated the others. They might indeed have sent some of the natives to gain instruction among foreigners, but the difference of languages, manners, and religion, opposed it. Besides, there was a law of state and religion equally sacred and pernicious, which prohibited any Russian from going out of his country, and thus seemed to devote this people to eternal ignorance. They were in possession of the most extensive dominions in the universe, and yet every thing was wanted amongst them. At length Peter was born, and Russia became a civilized state.

Happily, of all the great lawgivers who have lived in the world, Peter is the only one whose history is well known. Those of Theseus and Romulus, who did far less than him, and of the founders of all well-governed states, are blended with the most absurd fictions : whereas here, we have the advantage of writing truths, which would pass for fictions, where they not so well attested.

C H A P. III.

The ancestors of PETER the GREAT.

THE family of Peter the Great have been in possession of the throne ever since the year 1613. Before that time, Russia had undergone revolutions, which had retarded the reformation of her police, and the introduction of the liberal arts. This has been the fate of all human societies. No kingdom ever experienced more cruel troubles. In the year 1597, the tyrant Boris Godonow assassinated Demetrius (or Demetri, as he was called) the lawful heir, and usurped the empire. A young monk took the name of Demetrius, pretending to be that prince who had escaped from his murderers, and with the assistance of the Poles, and a considerable party (which every tyrant has against him) he drove out the usurper, and seized the crown himself. The imposture was discovered as soon as he came to the sovereignty, because the people was not pleased with him; and he was murdered. Three other false Demetrius's started up one after another. Such a succession of impostors, supposes a country in the utmost distraction. The less men are civilized, the more easily they are imposed on. It may readily be conceived, how much these frauds augmented the public confusion and misfortunes. The Poles, who had begun the revolutions, by setting up the first false Demetrius, were on the point of being masters of Russia. The Swedes shared in the spoils on the coast of Finland, and laid claim to the crown.

crown. The state seemed on the verge of utter destruction.

In the midst of these calamities, an assembly, composed of the principal boyards, chose for their sovereign, a young man of fifteen years of age: this happened in 1613, and did not seem a very likely method of putting an end to these troubles. This young man was Michael Romanow*, grand-father to Czar Peter, and son to the archbishop of Rotow, surnamed Philaret, and of a nun, and related by the mother's side to the ancient czars.

It must be observed, that this archbishop was a powerful nobleman, whom the tyrant Boris had obliged to become priest. His wife Scheremetow was likewise compelled to take the veil; this was the ancient custom of the western tyrants of the Latin church, as that of putting out the eyes, was with the Greek christians. The tyrant Demetrius made Philaret archbishop of Rostow, and sent him ambassador to Poland, where he was detained prisoner by the Poles, who were then at war with the Russians; so little was the law of nations known to the different people of these times. During his father's confinement, that young Romanow was elected czar. The archbishop was exchanged against some Polish prisoners; and at his return, his son created him patriarch, and the old man was in fact king under his son's name.

If such a government appears extraordinary to strangers, the marriages of czar Michael Romanow, will seem still more so. The Russian

* Thus the Russians call this young man, but in all French authors, we find Romano, that language having no such letter as the W; others again call him Romanoff.

prince had never intermarried with foreign states since the year 1490, or after they became masters of Casan and Astracan; they seem to have followed the Asiatic customs in almost every thing, and especially that of marrying only among their own subjects.

This conformity to the ancient customs of Asia, was still more conspicuous at the ceremonies observed at the marriage of a czar. A number of the most beautiful women in the province were sent for to court, where they were received by the grand gouvernante of the court, who provided apartments for them in her own house, where they all eat together. The czar paid them visits, sometimes incognito, and sometimes in his real character. The wedding-day was fixed, without its being declared on whom the choice had fallen. At the appointed time, the happy ~~she~~ was presented with a rich wedding-suit, and other dresses were given to the rest of the fair candidates, who then returned home. There have been four instances of these marriages.

In this manner was Michael Romanow espoused to Eudocia, the daughter of a poor gentleman, named Streschneu. He was employed in ploughing in his grounds with his servants, when the lords of the bed-chamber came to him with presents from the czar, and to acquaint him that his daughter was placed on the throne. The name of the princess is still held in the highest veneration by the Russians. This custom is greatly different from ours, but not the less respectable on that account.

It is necessary to observe, that before Romanow was elected czar, a strong party had made
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choice

choice of prince Ladislaus, son to Sigismund III. king of Poland. At the same time, the provinces bordering on Sweden, had offered the crown to a brother of Gustavus Adolphus: so that Russia was in the same situation then in which we have so frequently seen Poland, where the right of electing a king has been the source of civil wars. But the Russians did not follow the example of the Poles, who entered into a compact with the prince whom they elected; notwithstanding they had smarted from the oppression of tyrants, yet they voluntarily submitted to a young man, without making any conditions with him.

Russia never was an elective kingdom; but the male issue of the ancient sovereigns failing, and six czars, or pretenders, having perished miserably in the late troubles, there was, as we have observed, a necessity for electing a monarch; and this election occasioned fresh wars with Poland and Sweden, who maintained, with force of arms, their pretended rights to the crown of Russia. The right of governing a nation against its own will, can never be long supported. The Poles, on their side, after having advanced as far as Moscow, and exercised all the ravages in which the military expeditions of those times chiefly consisted, concluded a truce for fourteen years. By this truce, Poland remained in possession of the duchy of Smolensko, in which the Boristhenes has its source. The Swedes also made peace, in virtue of which they remained in possession of Ingria, and deprived the Russians of all communication with the Baltic sea, so that this empire was separated more than ever from the rest of Europe.

Michael

Michael Romanow, after this peace, reigned quietly, without making any alteration in the state, either to the improvement or corruption of the administration. After his death, which happened in 1645, his son Alexis Michaelowitz (or son of Michael) ascended the throne by hereditary right. It may be observed, that the czars were crowned by the patriarch of Russia, according to the ceremonies in use at Constantinople, except that the patriarch of Russia was seated on the same ascent with the sovereign, and constantly affected an equality highly insulting to the supreme power.

ALEXIS MICHAELOWITZ, the son of Michael.

Alexis was married in the same manner as his father, and from among the young women presented to him, he chose the one who appeared the most amiable in his eyes. He married a daughter of the boyard Melossauski in 1647; his second wife, whom he married in 1671, was of the family of Nariskin, and his favourite Morosow was married to another. There cannot be a more suitable title found for this favourite than that of visir, for he governed the empire in a despotic manner, and, by his great power, excited several commotions among the Strelitzes and the populace, as frequently happens at Constantinople.

The reign of Alexis was disturbed by bloody insurrections, and by domestic and foreign wars. A chief of the Don Cossacks, named Stenko-Rasin, endeavoured to make himself king of Astracan, and was for a long time very formidable; but being at length defeated and taken

prisoner, he ended his life by the hands of the executioner ; like all those of this stamp, who have nothing to expect but a throne or a scaffold. About 12,000 of his adherents are said to have been hanged, on the high road to Astracan. In this part of the world, men being uninfluenced by morality, were to be governed only by rigour ; and from this severity, frequently carried on to a degree of cruelty, arose slavery, and a secret thirst of revenge.

Alexis had a war with the Poles that proved successful, and terminated in a peace, which secured to him the possession of Smolensko, Kiow, and the Ukraine : but he was unfortunate against the Swedes, and the boundaries of the Russian empire were contracted within a very narrow compass on that side of the kingdom.

The Turks were at that time his most formidable enemies : they invaded Poland, and threatened the dominions of the czar that bordered upon Crim Tartary, the ancient Taurica Chersonesus. In 1671, they took the important city of Kaminiek, and all that belonged to Poland in the Ukraine. The Cossacks of that country, ever averse to subjection, knew not whether they belonged to the Turks, Poland, or Russia. Sultan Mahomet IV. who had conquered the Poles, and had just imposed a tribute upon them, demanded, with all the haughtiness of an Ottoman victor, that the czar should evacuate his possessions in the Ukraine, but received as haughty a denial from that prince. Men did not know at that time how to disguise their pride, by an outside of civility. The sultan, in his letter, styled the sovereign of the Russias only Christian Hospodar, and entitled himself “ most gracious
“ majesty

"majesty, king of the universe." The czar replied in these terms, "that he scorned to submit to a Mahometan dog, and that his scimiter was as good as the Grand Seignior's sabre."

Alexis at that time formed a design which seemed to presage the influence which the Russian empire would one day obtain in the christian world. He sent ambassadors to the Pope, and to almost all the great sovereigns in Europe, excepting France, (which was in alliance with the Turks) in order to establish a league against the Ottoman Porte. His ambassadors at the court of Rome succeeded only in not being obliged to kiss the Pope's toe; and in other courts they met only with unprofitable good wishes; the quarrels of the christian princes between themselves, and the jarring interests arising from those quarrels, having constantly prevented them from uniting against the common enemy of christianity.

In the mean time, the Turks threatened to chastise the Poles, who refused to pay their tribute: czar Alexis assisted on the side of Crim Tartary, and John Sobieski, general of the crown, wiped off his country's stain in the blood of the Turks, at the famous battle of Choczim * in 1674, which paved his way to the throne. Alexis disputed this very throne with him, and proposed to unite his extensive dominions to Poland, as the Jagellons had done; but in regard to Lithuania, the greatness of his offer was the cause of its being rejected. He is

* Or Chotzin, a town of Upper Moldavia in European Turkey, well fortified both by nature and art, situated on the Dniester, and subject to the Turks, from whom it was taken by the Russians in 1739.

said to have been very deserving of the new kingdom, by the manner in which he governed his own. He was the first who caused a body of laws to be digested in Russia, though imperfect; and introduced both linen and silk manufactures, which indeed were not long kept up; nevertheless, he had the merit of their first establishment. He peopled the deserts about the Wolga and the Kama, with Lithuanian, Polish, and Tartarian families, whom he had taken prisoners in his wars: before his reign, all prisoners of war were the slaves of those to whose lot they fell. Alexis employed them in agriculture: he did his utmost endeavours to introduce discipline among his troops: in a word, he was worthy of being the father of Peter the Great; but he had no time to perfect what he had begun, being snatched away by a sudden death, at the age of 46, in the beginning of the year 1677, according to our style, which is eleven days forwarder than that of Russia.

FOEDOR, *or* THEODORE ALEXOWITZ.

Upon the death of Alexis, son of Michael, all fell again into confusion. He left by his first marriage, two princes, and six princesses. Theodore, the eldest, ascended the throne at 15 years of age. He was a prince of a weak and sickly constitution, but of merit superior to his bodily infirmities. His father Alexis had caused him to be acknowledged his successor, a year before his death: a conduct observed by the kings of France from Hugh Capet, down to Lewis the Young, and by many other crowned heads.

The

The second son of Alexis was Iwan or John, who was still worse treated by nature than his brother Theodore, being almost blind and dumb, very infirm, and frequently attacked with convulsions. Of six daughters, born of this first marriage, the only one who made any figure in Europe, was the princess Sophia, who was remarkable for her great talents; but unhappily still more so for the mischief she intended against Peter the Great.

Alexis, by his second marriage with another of his subjects, daughter of the boyard Nariskin, had Peter, and the princess Nathalia. Peter was born the 30th of May (or the 10th of June new style) in the year 1672; and was but four years old when he lost his father. As the children of a second marriage were not much regarded in Russia, it was little expected that he would one day mount the throne.

It had ever been the character of the family of Romanow to civilize their state. It was also that of Theodore. We have already remarked in speaking of Moscow, that this prince encouraged the inhabitants of that city, to build a great number of stone houses. He likewise enlarged that capital, and made several useful regulations in the general police. But by attempting to reform the boyards, he made them all his enemies: besides, he was not possessed of sufficient knowledge, vigour, or resolution, to venture upon making a general reformation. The war with the Turks, or rather with the Crim Tartars, in which he was constantly engaged with alternate success, would not permit a prince of his weak state of health, to attempt so great a work. Theodore, like the rest of his predecessors,

married one of his own subjects, a native of the frontiers of Poland ; but having lost her in less than a year after their nuptials, he took for his second wife, in 1682, Martha Matweowna, daughter of the secretary Nariskin *. Some months after this marriage, he was seized with the disorder which ended his days, and died without leaving any children. As the czar's married without regard to birth, they might likewise (at least at that time) appoint a successor without respect to primogeniture. The dignity of comfort and heir to the sovereign seemed to be entirely the reward of merit ; and in that respect, the custom of this empire was much preferable to the customs of more civilized states.

Theodore, before he expired, seeing that his brother Iwan was by his natural infirmities incapable of governing, nominated his younger brother Peter, heir to the empire of Russia. Peter, who was then only in his tenth year, had already given the most promising hopes.

If, on the one hand, the custom of raising a subject to the rank of czarina, was favourable to the females, there was another which was no less hard upon them ; namely, that the daughters of the czars were very seldom married, but were most of them obliged to pass their lives in a monastery.

The princess Sophia, third daughter of czar Alexis, by his first marriage, was possessed of abilities, equally great and dangerous. Perceiving that her brother Theodore had not long to live, she

* This must certainly be a mistake of M. de Voltaire, or an error in the press ; for the lady here spoken of, was the daughter of Matthias Apraxin, a person on whom Theodore had lately conferred nobility.

did not retire to a convent; but finding herself situated between two brothers, one of whom was incapable of governing, through his natural inability; and the other, on account of his youth, she conceived the design of placing herself at the head of the empire. Hence, in the last hours of czar Theodore, she attempted to act the part that Pulcheria had formerly played with her brother, the emperor Theodosius.

C H A P. IV.

J O H N and P E T E R.

Horrible sedition among the STRELITZES*.

1682. **C**ZAR Theodore's eyes were scarcely closed, when the nomination of a prince of only ten years old to the throne, the exclusion of the elder brother, and the intrigues of the princess Sophia, their sister, excited a most bloody revolt amongst the Strelitzes. Never did the Janissaries, nor the Prætorian guards, exercise more horrible barbarities. The insurrection began two days after the interment of Theodore, when they all ran to arms in the Cremelin, which is the imperial palace at Moscow. There they began with accusing nine of their colonels, for keeping back part of their pay. The ministry was obliged to break the colonels, and to pay the Strelitzes the money they demanded; but this did not satisfy them, they insisted upon having these nine officers deli-

* Extracted wholly from the memoirs sent from Moscow and Petersburg.

vered up to them, and condemned them by a majority of votes, to suffer the *Battogs* or *Knout*; the manner of which punishment is as follows:

The delinquent is stripped naked, and laid flat on his belly, while two executioners beat him over the back with switches or small canes, till the judge, who stands by to see the sentence put in execution, says, "It is enough." The colonels, after being thus treated by their men, were obliged to return them thanks, according to the custom of the eastern nations; where criminals, after undergoing their punishment, must kiss the judge's hand. Besides complying with this custom, the officers gave them a sum of money, which was something more than the custom.

While the Strelitzes thus began to make themselves formidable, the princess Sophia, who secretly encouraged them, in order to lead them by degrees from crime to crime, held a meeting at her house, consisting of the princesses of the blood, the generals of the army, the boyards, the patriarch, the bishops, and even some of the principal merchants; where she represented to them, that prince John, by right of birth and merit, was entitled to the empire, the reins of which she intended to keep in her own hands. At the breaking up of the assembly, she caused a promise to be made to the Strelitzes, of an augmentation of pay, besides considerable presents. Her emissaries were in particular employed to stir up the soldiery against the Nariskin family, especially the two brothers of the young dowager czarina, the mother of Peter the First. These persuaded the Strelitzes, that one of the brothers, named John, had put on the imperial robes,

robes; had seated himself on the throne, and had attempted to strangle prince John; adding, moreover, that the late czar Theodore had been poisoned by a villain, named Daniel Vongad, a Dutch physician. At last Sophia put into their hands a list of forty noblemen, whom she styled enemies to their corps, and to the state, and as such worthy of death. These proceedings exactly resembled the proscriptions of Sylla, and the Roman triumvirate, which had been revived by Christian II. in Denmark and Sweden. This may serve to shew, that such cruelties prevail in all countries in times of anarchy and confusion. The mutineers began the tragedy with throwing the two knes, or princes, Dolgorouki and Matheof, out of the palace-windows; whom the Strelitzes received upon the points of their spears, then stripped them, and dragged their dead bodies into the great square; after this they rushed into the palace, where meeting with Athanasius Nariskin, a brother of the young czarina, and one of the uncles of czar Peter, they murdered him in like manner; then breaking open the door of a neighbouring church, where three of the proscribed persons had taken refuge, they drag them from the altar, strip them naked, and stab them to death with knives.

They were so blinded with their fury, that seeing a young nobleman of the family of Soltikoff, a great favourite of theirs, and who was not included in the list of the proscribed, and some of them mistaking him for John Nariskin, whom they were in search of, they murdered him upon the spot; and what plainly shews the manners of those times, after having discovered their error, they carried the body of young Sol-

tikoff to his father to bury it: and the wretched parent, far from daring to complain, gave them a considerable reward for bringing him the mangled body of his son. Being reproached by his wife, his daughters, and the widow of the deceased, for his weakness, "Let us wait for an opportunity of being revenged," said the old man. These words being overheard by some of the soldiers, they returned furiously back into the room, dragged the aged parent by the hair, and cut his throat at his own door.

Another party of the Strelitzes, who were scouring the city in search of the Dutch physician Vongad, met with his son, of whom they inquired for his father; the youth trembling, replied, he did not know where he was, upon which they immediately dispatched him. Soon after a German physician falling in their way, "You are a doctor, said they, and if you did not poison our master Theodore, you have poisoned others, and therefore merit death," and thereupon killed him.

At length they found the Dutchman, of whom they were in quest, disguised in the garb of a beggar; they instantly drag him before the palace: the princesses who loved this worthy man, and placed great confidence in his skill, begged the Strelitzes to spare him, assuring them that he was a very good physician, and had taken all possible care of their brother Theodore. The Strelitzes made answer, that he not only deserved to die as a physician, but also as a forcerer; and that they had found in his house a great dried toad, and the skin of a serpent. They furthermore required to have young Nariskin delivered up to them, whom they had searched for in vain for

two

two days ; alledging, that he was certainly in the palace, and that they would set fire to it, unless he was put into their hands. The sister of John Nariskin, and the other princesses, terrified by their menaces, went to acquaint their unhappy brother in the place of his concealment, with what had passed ; upon which the patriarch heard his confession, administers the viaticum and extreme unction to him, and then taking an image of the blessed Virgin, which was said to perform miracles, he lead the young man forth by the hand, and presents him to the Strelitzes, shewing them, at the same time, the image of the Virgin. The princesses, who in tears surrounded Nariskin, falling upon their knees before the soldiers, besought them, in the name of the blessed Virgin, to spare their relation's life ; but the inhuman wretches tore him from their arms, and dragged him to the foot of the stairs, together with the physician Vongad, where they held a kind of tribunal amongst themselves, and condemned them both to be put to the torture. One of the soldiers, who could write, drew up a form of accusation, and sentenced the two unfortunate princes to be cut in pieces ; a punishment inflicted in China and Tartary on parricides, and called the punishment of ten thousand slices. After having thus used Nariskin and Vongad, they exposed their heads, feet, and hands, on the iron points of a balustrade.

While this party of the Strelitzes were thus glutting their fury in the sight of the princesses, the rest massacred every one who was obnoxious to them, or suspected by the princess Sophia.

This

This horrid tragedy concluded with proclaiming the two princes, John and Peter, in June 1682, joint sovereigns, and associating their sister Sophia with them, in the quality of co-regent; who then publicly approved of all their outrages, gave them rewards, confiscated the estates of the proscribed, and bestowed them upon their murderers. She even permitted them to erect a monument, with the names of the persons they had murdered, as being traitors to their country: and to crown all, she published letters patent, thanking them for their zeal and fidelity.

C H A P. V.

Administration of the princess SOPHIA.

Extraordinary quarrel about religion. A conspiracy.

SUCH were the steps by which the princess Sophia did in effect ascend the throne of Russia, though without being declared czarina; and such the examples that PETER the FIRST had before his eyes. Sophia enjoyed all the honours of a sovereign; her bust was on the public coin; she signed all dispatches, held the first place in council, and enjoyed a power without controul. She was possessed of a great share of understanding, and some wit, made verses in the Russian language, and both spoke and wrote extremely well. These talents were set off by the addition of an agreeable person, and sullied only by her ambition.

She

She procured a wife for her brother John, in the manner already described in several examples. A young lady, named Soltikoff, of the family with the noblemen of that name who had been assassinated by the seditious Strelitzes, was sent for from the heart of Siberia, where her father commanded a fortress, to be presented to czar John at Moscow. Her beauty triumphed over all the intrigues of her rivals, and John was married to her in 1684. At every marriage of a czar, we seem to read the history of Ahasuerus, or that of Theodosius the Younger.

In the midst of the rejoicings on account of this marriage, the Strelitzes raised a new insurrection, and (who would believe it?) on account of religion! of a particular tenet! Had they been mere soldiers, they would never have become controvertists, but they were also citizens of Moscow. Whosoever has, or assumes a right of speaking in an authoritative manner to the populace, may found a sect. This has been seen in all ages, and all parts of the world, especially since the passion of dogmatizing has become the instrument of ambition, and the terror of weak minds.

Russia had experienced some previous disturbances on occasion of a dispute, whether the sign of a cross was to be made with three fingers, or with two? One Abakum, who was all the priest, had set up some new tenets at Moscow, in regard to the holy spirit; which, according to the scriptures, enlightened all the faithful; as likewise with respect to the equality of the primitive christians, and these words of Christ, "There shall be amongst you neither first nor last." Several citizens, and many of the
Strelitzes,

Strelitzes, embraced the opinions of Abakum. One Raspop † was the chief of this party, which became considerable. The sectaries, at length, entered (July 16, 1682, new style) the cathedral, where the patriarch and his clergy were officiating; drove them out of the church with stones, and seated themselves very devoutly in their places, to receive the holy spirit. They called the patriarch the "ravenous wolf in the sheepfold;" a title which all sects have liberally bestowed on each other. The princess Sophia, and the two czars, were immediately made acquainted with these disturbances; and the other Strelitzes, who were staunch to the good old cause, were given to understand, that the czars and the church were in danger. Upon this the Strelitzes and burghers of the patriarchal party attacked the Abakumists; but a stop was put to the carnage, by publishing a convocation of a council, which was immediately assembled in a hall of the palace. This took up very little time, for they obliged every priest they met to attend. The patriarch, and a bishop, disputed against Raspop; but at the second syllogism, they began to throw stones at one another. The council ended with ordering Raspop, and some of his faithful disciples, to have their heads struck off; and the sentence was executed by the sole order of the three sovereigns, Sophia, John, and Peter.

During these troubles, there was a knes, named Chowanskoi, who, having been instrumental in raising the princess Sophia to the dig-

† Here M. de Voltaire seems to have greatly mistaken the sense of this word. Raspop not being a proper name, in which sense he takes it, but signifies a degraded priest.

nity we then held, wanted, as a reward for his services, to have a share in the administration.

It may be supposed, that he found Sophia not so grateful as he could wish; upon which he espoused the cause of religion, and the persecuted Raspopians, and stirred up a party among the Strelitzes and the people, in defence of God's name.

This conspiracy proved a more serious affair than the enthusiastic riot of Raspop. An ambitious hypocrite always carries things farther than a simple fanatic. Chowanskoi aimed at no less than the imperial dignity; and to rid himself of all cause of fear, he resolved to murder the two czars, Sophia, the other princesses, and every one who was attached to the imperial family. The czars and the princesses were obliged to retire to the monastery of the Holy Trinity, within twelve leagues of Petersbourg *. This was, at the same time, a convent, a palace, and a fortress, like mount Cassino †, Corby ‡, Fulda §, Kempten §, and several others belonging to the Latin church. This monastery of the Trinity belongs to the monks of St. Basil. It is surrounded by deep ditches, and ramparts of

* We suppose the author means Moscow.

† Or Cossano, a small town and abbey in the Milanese. On the Adda, near this place, an obstinate battle was fought between the Germans and French, in 1705, when prince Eugene defeated the duke of Vendome.

‡ A town and abbey on the borders of Westphalia, in Germany; the abbot of which is a sovereign prince, and has a seat in the imperial diet.

§ Or Fuld, a town and abbey of Hesse, in Germany, situate on a river of the same name. It is governed by an abbot, who is a prince of the empire.

§ An imperial city of Suabia, in Germany, situate on the Mar.

brick,

brick, on which is planted a numerous artillery. The monks are possessed of all the country round for four leagues. The imperial family were in full safety there, but more on account of the strength, than the sanctity of the place. Here Sophia treated with the rebel knes; and having decoyed him half way, caused his head to be struck off, together with those of one of his
1682 sons, and thirty-seven Strelitzes who accompanied him.

The body of Strelitzes upon this news, fly to arms, and march to attack the convent of Trinity, threatening to destroy every thing that came in their way. The imperial family stood upon their defence; the boyards arm their vassals, all the gentlemen flocked in, and a bloody civil war seemed on the point of beginning. The patriarch somewhat pacified the Strelitzes, who began to be intimidated with the number of troops that were marching towards them on all sides: in short, their fury was changed into fear, and their fear into the most abject submission; a change common to the multitude. Three thousand seven hundred of this corps, followed by their wives and children, with ropes tied about their necks, went in procession to the convent of the Trinity, which three days before they had threatened to burn to the ground. In this condition, these unhappy wretches present themselves before the gate of the convent, two by two, one carrying a block, and another an ax; and prostrating themselves on the ground, waited for their sentence. They were pardoned upon their submission, and returned back to Moscow, blessing their sovereigns; and still disposed, tho'
unknown

unknown to themselves, to commit the same crime upon the very first opportunity.

These commotions being subsided, the state resumed an exterior of tranquillity; but Sophia still remained possessed of the chief authority, leaving John to his incapacity, and keeping Peter in the subjection of a ward. In order to strengthen her power, she shared it with prince Basil Galitzin, whom she created generalissimo, minister of state, and lord keeper. Galitzin was in every respect superior to any person in that distracted court: he was polite, magnificent, full of great designs, more learned than any of his countrymen, as having received a much better education, and was even master of the Latin tongue, which was, at that time, almost entirely unknown in Russia. He was of an active and indefatigable spirit, had a genius superior to the times he lived in, and capable, had he had leisure and power, as he had inclination, to have changed the face of things in Russia. This is the elogium given of him by La Neuville, at that time the Polish envoy in Russia; and the encomiums of foreigners are seldom to be suspected.

This minister bridled the insolence of the Strelitzes, by distributing the most mutinous of that body, among the several regiments in the Ukraine, in Casan, and Siberia. It was under his administration, that the Poles, long the rivals of Russia, gave up, in 1686, all pretensions to the large provinces of Smolensko and the Ukraine. He was the first who sent an embassy to France, in 1687; a country, which had for upwards of twenty years been in the zenith of its glory, by the conquests, new establishments, and the magnificence of Lewis XIV. and especially by the improvement

improvement of the arts, there can be only external grandeur, but solid glory. France had not then entered into any correspondence with Russia, or rather was unacquainted with that empire; and the academy of inscriptions ordered a medal to be struck to commemorate this embassy, as if it had come from the most distant part of the Indies; but notwithstanding all this, the ambassador Dolgorouski miscarried in his negociation, and even suffered some gross affronts on account of the behaviour of his domestics, whose mistakes it would have been better to have overlooked; but the court of Lewis XIV. could not then foresee, that France and Russia would one day reckon among the number of their advantages, that of being cemented by the closest union.

Russia was now quiet at home, but she was still pent up on the side of Sweden, though enlarged towards Poland, her new ally, in continual alarms on the side of Crim Tartary, and at variance with China in regard to the frontiers.

The most intolerable circumstance for their empire, and which plainly shewed, that it had not yet attained to a vigorous and regular administration was, that the Khan of the Crim Tartars exacted an annual tribute of 6000 rubles, in the nature of that which the Turk had imposed on the Poles.

Crim Tartary is the ancient Taurica Chersonesus, formerly so famous by the commerce of the Greeks, and still more by their fables, a fruitful but barbarous country. It took its name of Crimea or Crim, from the title of its first Khans, who took this name before the conquests

quests of the sons of Gengis Khan. To free his country from this yoke, and wipe off the disgrace of such a tribute, the prime minister, Galitzin, marched in person into 1687. Crim Tartary, at the head of a numerous army. These armies were not to be compared to the present troops; they had no discipline; there was hardly one regiment completely armed; they had no uniform cloathing, no regularity: their men indeed were inured to hard labour and a scarcity of provisions, but then they carried with them such a prodigious quantity of baggage, as far exceeded any thing of the kind in our camps, where the greatest luxury prevails. Their vast number of waggons for carrying ammunition and provisions, in an uninhabitable and desert country, greatly retarded the expedition against Crim Tartary: The army found itself in the midst of the vast deserts, on the river Samara, unprovided with magazines. Here Gallitzin did, what, in my opinion, was never done any where else: he employed 30,000 men in building a town on the banks of the Samara, to serve as a place for magazines in the ensuing campaign: it was begun in one year, and finished in the third month of the following; the houses indeed were all of wood except two, which were brick; the ramparts were of turf, but well lined with artillery; and the whole place was in a tolerable state of defence.

This was all that was done of any consequence in this ruinous expedition. In the mean while, Sophia continued to govern in Moscow, while John had only the name of czar; and Peter, now at the age of seventeen, had already
the

the courage to aim at real sovereignty. La Neuville, the Polish envoy, then resident at Moscow, and who was eye-witness to all that passed, pretends that Sophia and Gallitzin had engaged the new chief of the Strelitzes, to sacrifice to them their young czar : it appears, at least, that 600 of these Strelitzes were to have made themselves masters of his person. The private memoirs, which have been entrusted to my perusal, by the court of Russia, affirm, that a scheme had actually been laid to murder Peter the First : the blow was on the point of being struck, and Russia for ever deprived of the new existence she has since received. The czar was once more obliged to take refuge in the convent of the Trinity, the usual asylum of the court when threatened by the soldiers. There he assembled the boyards of his party, raised a body of forces, treats with the captains of the Strelitzes, and called in the assistance of certain Germans, who had been long settled in Moscow, and were all attached to his person, from his having already shewn himself the encourager of strangers. Sophia and John, who continued at Moscow, used every means to engage the Strelitzes, to remain firm to their interests ; but the cause of young Peter, who loudly complained of an attempt meditated against himself and his mother, prevailed over that of the princess, and of a czar, whose very aspect alienated all hearts. All the accomplices were punished with a severity to which that country was as much accustomed, as to the crimes which occasioned it. Some were beheaded, after undergoing the punishment of the knout or battocks. The chief of the Strelitzes was put to death in the same manner,

manner, and several other suspected persons had their tongues cut out. Prince Galitzin escaped with his life, through the intercession of one of his relations, who was a favourite of czar Peter; but he was stripped of all his riches, which were immense, and banished to a place in the neighbourhood of Archangel. La Neuville, who was present at the whole of this catastrophe, relates, that the sentence pronounced upon Galitzin, was in these terms. "Thou art commanded, by the most clement czar, to repair to Karga, a town under the Pole, and there to continue the remainder of thy days. His majesty, out of his extreme goodness, allows the three pence per day for thy subsistence."

There is no town under the Pole. Karga is in the 62d degree of latitude, and only six degrees and an half further north than Moscow. Whoever pronounced this sentence, must have been a very bad geographer. La Neuville was probably imposed upon by a false account.

1689. At length, the princess Sophia was once more sent back to her monastery at Moscow *, after having so long held the reins of government; and this revolution proved, to a woman of her disposition, a sufficient punishment.

From this instant Peter began to reign in reality; his brother John having no other share in the government, but that of seeing his name to all public acts. He led a retired life, and died in 1646.

* How are we to reconcile this with what the author tells us in the latter part of the third chapter, where he says, that this princess, perceiving that her brother Theodore was near his end, declined retiring to a convent, as was the usual custom of the princesses of the imperial family?

C H A P. VI.

The REIGN of PETER the FIRST.

Beginning of the Grand Reformation.

PETER the Great was tall, genteel, well-made, with a noble aspect, piercing eyes, and a robust constitution, fitted for all kinds of hardship and bodily exercise. He had a sound understanding, which is the basis of all real abilities; and to this was joined an active disposition, which prompted him to undertake and execute the greatest things. His education was far from being worthy of his genius. The princess Sophia was, in a peculiar manner, interested to let him remain in ignorance, and to indulge himself in those excesses which youth, idleness, custom, and the high rank he held, made but too allowable. Nevertheless, June 1689. he had been lately married, like others of his predecessors, to one of his own subjects, the daughter of colonel Lapuchin; but as he was young, and for some time enjoyed none of the prerogatives of the crown, but that of indulging his pleasures without restraint, the ties of wedlock were not always sufficient to keep him within just bounds. The pleasures of the table, in which he indulged himself rather too freely, with foreigners who had been invited to Moscow by prince Galitzin, seemed not to presage that he would one day become the reformer of his country; however, in spite of bad examples, and even the allurements of

of pleasures, he applied himself to the arts of war and government, and which even then shewed, that he had the seeds of greatness in him.

It was still less expected, that a prince, who was subject to such a constitutional dread of water, as to subject him to cold sweats, and even convulsions, when he was obliged to cross a small river or a brook, should become one of the best seamen in all the North. In order to get the better of nature, he began by jumping into the water, notwithstanding the horror he felt at it, till at length this aversion was changed into a fondness for that element *.

He often blushed at the ignorance in which he had been brought up. He learned, almost of himself, without the help of a master, enough of grammar and High Dutch, to be able to write and explain himself tolerably well in both those languages. The Germans and Dutch appeared to him as the most civilized nations, because the former had already erected in Moscow, some of those arts and manufactures which he was desirous of seeing established in his empire and the latter excelled in the art of navigation, which

* We find in the memoirs of count Strahlenberg, a Swedish officer, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Pultowa, and continued many years at the court of czar Peter, the following account of the true cause of this extraordinary kind of hydrophobia. When Peter was about five years of age, his mother took him with her in a coach for an airing, and having to pass a dam, where there was a great fall of water, the child, who was then sleeping in his nurse's lap, was so terrified by the rushing of the water, (the noise of which waked him suddenly out of his sleep) that he was seized with a violent fever, and after his recovery, he retained such a dread of that element, that he could not bear the sight even of any standing water, much less to hear a running stream.

he already began to look upon as the most necessary of all others.

Such were the dispositions which Peter cherished, notwithstanding the follies of his youth. At the same time, he found himself disturbed by factions at home, had the turbulent spirit of the Strelitzes to keep under, and an almost uninterrupted war to manage against the Crim Tartars. For tho' hostilities had been suspended in 1679 by a truce, it had no long continuance.

During this interval, Peter became confirmed in his design of introducing the arts into his country.

His father Alexis had, in his life-time, entertained the same views, but he wanted leisure, and a favourable opportunity to carry them into execution ; he transmitted his genius to his son, who was more clear-sighted, more vigorous, and more unshaken by difficulties and obstacles.

Alexis had been at a great expence in sending for Bothler †, a ship-builder and sea-captain, from Holland, together with a number of shipwrights and sailors. These built a large frigate and a yacht upon the Wolga, which they navigated down that river to Astracan where they were to be employed in building more vessels, for carrying on an advantageous trade with Persia by the Caspian sea. Just at this time the revolt of Stenka Rasin broke out, and this rebel destroyed these two vessels, which he ought to have preserved for his own sake, and murdered the captain ; the rest of the crew fled into Persia, from whence they got to some settlements belonging to the Dutch East-India company. A

† Memoirs of Petersbourg and Moscow.

master-builder, who was a good shipwright, staid behind in Russia, where he lived a long time in obscurity.

One day, Peter taking a walk at Ishmaelof, a summer-palace built by his grand-father, he perceived, among several others rarities, an old English shallop, which had lain entirely neglected : upon which he asked Timmerman, a German, and his mathematical teacher, how came that little boat to be of so different a construction from any he had seen on the Moskva ? Timmerman replied, that it was made to go with sails and oars. The young prince wanted instantly to make a trial of it ; but it was first to be repaired and rigged. Brant, the ship-builder abovementioned, was by accident found out at Moscow, where he lived retired ; he soon put the boat in order, and worked her upon the river Yauza, which washes the suburbs of the town.

Peter caused his boat to be removed to a great lake, in the neighbourhood of the convent of the Trinity ; he likewise made Brant build two more frigates, and three yachts, and piloted them himself. A considerable time afterwards, viz. in 1694, he made a journey to Archangel, and having ordered a small vessel to be built in that port by the same Brant, he embarked therein on the Frozen sea, which no sovereign beside himself had ever beheld. On this occasion, he was escorted by a Dutch man of war, under the command of captain Jolson, and attended by all the merchant vessels then in the port of Archangel. He had already learned the manner of working a ship ; and notwithstanding the pains his courtiers took to imitate their master,

he was the only one who made a proficiency in it.

He found it no less difficult to raise a well-disciplined body of land forces on whom he could depend, than to establish a navy. His first essay in navigation, on a lake, previous to his journey to Archangel, was looked upon only as the amusements of a young prince of genius; and his first attempt to form a body of disciplined troops, likewise appeared as nothing more than that of diversion. This happened during the regency of the princess Sophia; and had he been suspected of meaning any thing serious by this amusement, it might have been attended with fatal consequences to him.

He placed his confidence in a foreigner, the celebrated Le Fort, of a noble and ancient family in Piedmont, transplanted near two centuries ago to Geneva, where they have filled the most considerable posts in the state. He was intended to have been brought up to trade, to which that town is indebted for the figure it now makes, having formerly been known only as the seat of religious controversies.

But his genius, which prompted him to the greatest undertakings, engaged him to quit his father's house at the age of fourteen; and he served four months † in quality of a cadet in the citadel of Marseilles; from thence he went to Holland, where he served some time as a volunteer, and was wounded at the siege of Grave,

† This should certainly be four years, as we can hardly suppose a boy of 14 years and an half, would be received into the military service of any country, and much less by the Dutch at that period of time, when they stood in need of able and experienced soldiers, to withstand the attacks of the French, who breathed nothing less than the utter subversion of their state.

a strong fortified town on the Meuse, which the prince of Orange, afterwards king of England, retook from Lewis XIV. in 1694. After this, led by hopes of preferment, wherever he could find it, he embarked with a German colonel, named Verstin, who had obtained a commission from Peter's father, the czar Alexis, to raise soldiers in the Netherlands, and bring them to Archangel. But when he arrived at that port, after a most fatiguing and dangerous navigation, the czar Alexis was no more; the government was changed, and Russia in confusion. The governor of Archangel suffered Verstin, Le Fort, and his whole troop, to remain a long time, in the utmost poverty and distress, and even threatened to send them into the extremity of Siberia: upon which every man shifted for himself. Le Fort, in want of every thing, repaired to Moscow, where he waited upon the Danish resident, named de Horn, who made him his secretary, there he learned the Russian language, and some time afterwards found means to be introduced to czar Peter; the elder brother Iwan, not being a person for his purpose. Peter was taken with him, and immediately gave him a company of foot. Le Fort had seen very little service, he knew but little of letters, not having studied any particular art or science; but he had seen a great deal, and had a talent of making the most of what he saw. Like the czar, he owned every thing to his own genius; he understood the German and Dutch languages, which Peter was learning, as those of two nations that might be of service in his designs. Every thing conspired to make him agreeable to Peter, to whom he strictly attached himself.

himself. From being the companion of his pleasures, he became his favourite, and confirmed himself in that station by his abilities. The czar made him his confidant in the most dangerous design, that a prince of that country could possibly form, namely, that of putting himself in a condition to be able one day to break the seditious and barbarous body of forces called the Strelitzes. It had cost the great sultan or bashaw Osman his life, for attempting to disband the Janissaries. Peter, young as he was, went to work in a much abler manner than Osman.

He began with forming, at his country-seat at Preobrazinski, a company of fifty of his youngest domestics; and some young gentlemen, the sons of boyards, were chosen for their officers: but in order to teach these young noblemen a subordination, to which they were wholly unaccustomed, he made them pass through all the different military degrees, and himself set them the example, by serving first as a drum, then as a private soldier, a serjeant, and a lieutenant of the company. Nothing was ever more extraordinary, nor more useful than this conduct. The Russians had hitherto made war in the same manner of our ancestors at the time of the feudal tenures, when the unexperienced nobles took the field at the head of their vassals, undisciplined, and ill-armed: a barbarous method, sufficient indeed to act against the like armies, but of no use against regular troops.

This company, which was formed wholly by Peter himself, soon increased in numbers, and became afterwards the regiment of Preobrazinski guards. Another regiment, formed on the same plan,

plan, became in time the regiment of Semeniousky guards.

The czar had already a regiment of five thousand men that could be depended upon, trained by general Gordon, a Scotchman, and composed almost entirely of foreigners. Le Fort, who had borne arms but a short time, but whose capacity was equal to every thing, undertook to raise a regiment of 12,000 men, which he effected: five colonels were appointed to serve under him, and he saw himself on a sudden general of this little army, which had been raised, as much to oppose the Strelitzes, as the enemies of the state.

One thing worthy being remarked*, and which fully confutes the hasty error of those who pretend, that France lost very few of its inhabitants by the revocation of the edict of Nantz, is, that one-third of his army, which was only called a regiment, consisted of French refugees. Le Fort disciplined his new troops, as if he had been all his life-time a soldier.

Peter was desirous of seeing one of those images of war, the mock fights, which had been lately introduced in times of peace: a fort was erected, which was to be attacked by one part of his new troops, and defended by the other. The difference between this fight and others of the like nature, was, that instead of a sham engagement, there was a real one, in which some of his men were slain, and a great many wounded†. Le Fort, who commanded the attack, received a considerable wound. These bloody sports were intended to initiate the young

* General le Fort's MSS.

† Idem.

troops into the service of the field ; but it required much labour, and even some degree of sufferings, to compass this end.

These warlike amusements did not take off the czar's attention to his naval project. As he had made Le Fort a general by land, notwithstanding his having never borne a command ; he now made him admiral, though he had never had the direction of a ship ; but he knew him deserving both of the one and the other. It is true, that he was an admiral without a fleet, and a general with only his regiment for an army.

By degrees the czar reformed that great abuse in the army, viz. the independence of the boyards, who, in the time of war, used to bring into the field a multitude of their vassals and peasants : this was exactly the ancient government of the Franks, Huns, Goths, and Vandals, who indeed subdued the Roman empire in its state of decline, but would have been totally destroyed, had they had the warlike disciplined legions of ancient Rome to encounter, or such armies as are now brought into the field.

Admiral Le Fort was not long, however, before he had something more than an empty title. He employed some Dutchmen and Venetians in building a number of barcolongos, or kind of long barks, and also two ships of about thirty guns each, at the mouth of the Woronitz, which falls into the Tanais, or Don : these vessels were to sail down the river, and keep in awe the Crim Tartars, with whom hostilities had been renewed.

The czar was now to determine (in 1689) against which of the following powers he would declare

declare war, whether against the Turks, the Swedes, or the Chinese. But here it will be proper to premise on what terms he then stood with China, and which was the first treaty of peace concluded by that nation.

C H A P. VII.

Congress and Treaty with the CHINESE*.

WE must set out by forming a proper idea of the limits of the Chinese and Russian empires at this period. When we leave Siberia, properly so called, and also far behind us to the south, an hundred hords of Tartars, with white and black Calmucks, and mahometan and pagan Moguls, we come to the 130th degree of longitude, and the 25d of latitude, upon the river Amur†. To the northward is a great chain of mountains, that stretches as far as the Frozen Sea, beyond the polar circle. This river, which runs upwards of 500 leagues‡, through Siberia and Chinese Tartary, falls after many windings into the sea of Kamt-

* Extracted from memoirs sent from China; also from Petersbourg, and from letters published in Du Halde's History of China.

† A famous and considerable river of the Asiatic part of the empire of Russia, which falls into the eastern ocean. It was formerly called Charan Muran; but at present the Chinese and Manschurs give it the name of Sagalin Ula. It also bears the several appellations of Jamur, Helong, Kiang, and Skilka. It is formed by junction of the rivers Skilk and Argun, and is navigable to the sea.

‡ Busching, the famous geographer, says, that its whole length is no more than 400 miles, so that there must be a very great error in the one or other of these authors.

shatka. It is affirmed for a truth, that at its mouth, which opens with this sea, there is sometimes caught a monstrous fish, much larger than the hypopotamus of the Nile, and that the tooth thereof is the finest ivory. It is furthermore said, that this ivory was formerly an object of trade: that they used to convey it through Siberia, which is the reason why several pieces of it are still found under ground in that country. This is the most probable account of that fossil ivory, of which we have elsewhere spoken; for it appears highly chimerical to pretend, that there were formerly elephants in Siberia.

This Amur is likewise called the Black river by the Mantechoux Tartars, and the Dragons river by the Chinese.

It was in these countries, so long unknown, that the Russians and Chinese contested the limits of their empires*. The Russians had some forts on the river Amur, about three hundred leagues from the great wall. Many hostilities had arisen between these two nations on account of these forts: at length both began to understand their interests better; the emperor Camhi preferred peace and commerce to an unprofitable war, and sent several ambassadors to Niptchou, one of those settlements. The ambassadors had ten thousand men in their retinue, including their escort. This was Asiatic pomp; but what is very remarkable is, that there was not an example in the annals of the empire, of an embassy being sent to another potentate; and what is still more singular, that the Chinese had never concluded a treaty of peace since the foundation

* Memoirs of the Jesuits Pereira and Gerbillon.

of their monarchy. Though twice conquered by the Tartars, who attacked and subjected them, they never made war upon any people, excepting a few hords that were quickly subdued, or as quickly left to themselves, without any treaty. So that this nation, so renowned for morality, knew nothing of what we call the "Law of Nations;" that is to say, of those vague rules of war and peace, of the privileges of foreign ministers, of the formalities of treaties, nor of the obligations resulting from thence, nor of the disputes concerning precedence and point of honour.

But in what language were the Chinese to negotiate with the Russians, in the midst of deserts? This difficulty was removed by two jesuits, the one a Portuguese, named Pereira, the other a Frenchman, whose name was Gerbillion; they set out from Peking with the Chinese ambassadors, and were themselves the real negotiators. They conferred in Latin with a German belonging to the Russian embassy, who understood this language. The chief of that embassy was Golowin, governor of Siberia, who displayed a greater magnificence than the Chinese themselves, and thereby gave a high idea of the Russian empire, to a people who thought themselves the only powerful nation under the sun.

The two Jesuits settled the limits of both empires, at the river Kerbechi, near the spot where the treaty was concluded. All the country, to the southward of this line of partition, was adjudged to the Chinese, and the north to the Russians, who only lost a small fort which was found to have been built beyond the limits: a

peace was agreed to, and after some few alterations, both parties swore to observe it, in the name of the same God †; and in these terms, “ If any of us shall entertain the least
“ thought of kindling anew the flames of war,
“ we beseech the supreme Lord of all things,
“ and who knows all hearts, to punish the
“ traitor with sudden death.”

From this form of treaty, used alike by Chinese and Christians, we may infer two important truths; the first, that the Chinese government is neither atheistical nor idolatrous, as has been so frequently and falsely charged upon it, by contradictory imputations. Secondly, that all nations who cultivate the gifts of reason and understanding, do, in effect, acknowledge the same God, notwithstanding the particular deviations of that reason, thro’ the want of being properly instructed.

The treaty was drawn up in Latin, and two copies were made of it. The Russian ambassadors set their names the first to the copy that remained in their possession, and the Chinese also signed their’s the first, agreeable to the custom observed by European nations, when two equal powers conclude a treaty with each other. On this occasion was observed another custom belonging to the Asiatic nations, and which was, indeed, that of the earliest ages. The treaty was engraven on two large marble pillars, erected on the spot, to determine the boundaries of the two empires.

Three years after this, the czar sent Isbrand Ides, a Dane, his ambassador to China; and the commerce he then established between the

† 1689, September 8, New Style. *Memoirs of China.*

two nations, continued with advantage to each, till the rupture between them in the year 1722; but since this short interruption, it has been revived with redoubled vigour.

C H A P. VIII.

Expedition to the PALUS MÆOTIS, conquest of ASOPH.

The czar sends young gentlemen into foreign countries for improvement.

IT was not so easy to have peace with the Turks, and indeed the time seemed come for the Russians to rise upon their ruins. The republic of Venice, that had long groaned under their yoke, began now to rouse itself. The Doge Morosini, the same who had surrendered Candy to the Turks, afterwards took from them the Peloponnesus, which conquest got him the title of *Peloponnesian*, an honour which revived the memory of the Roman republic. Leopold, emperor of Germany, had proved successful against the Ottoman power in Hungary: and the Poles made shift to check the incursions of the Crim Tartars.

Peter took advantage of these circumstances, to discipline his troops, and to procure himself the empire of the Black Sea. General Gordon marched along the Tanais, towards Asoph, with his numerous regiment of 5000 men, followed by general Le Fort, with his regiment of 12,000; by a body of Strelitzes, under the command of Scheremetow,

Scheremetow and Schein, natives of Prussia ; by a body of Cossacks, and by a large train of artillery : in a word, every thing was
 1694 ready for this expedition.

This grand army began its march under the command of marshal Scheremetow, or Scheremetoff, in the beginning of the summer of 1695, to attack the town of Asoph, at the mouth of the Tanais, and at the extremity of the Palus Mæotis now called the Zaback Sea. The czar himself was with the army, but only in quality of a volunteer, being determined to learn, some time before he took upon him to command. During their march, they stormed two forts which the Turks had built on the banks of the river.

This expedition was attended with some considerable difficulties. The place was well fortified, and defended by a numerous garrison. A number of barcolongos, resembling the Turkish saicks, and built by Venetians, with two small Dutch ships of war that were to sail out of the Woronitz, could not be got ready soon enough to enter the sea of Asoph. All beginnings meet with obstacles. The Russians had never yet made a regular siege ; and the first attempt did not meet with all the success that could be desired.

One Jacob, a native of Dantzick, had the direction of the artillery, under the command of general Schein ; for as yet they had none but foreign officers belonging to the train, and none but foreign engineers and pilots. This Jacob had been condemned to the bastinade, or *knout*, by Schein, the Russian general. At that time rigorous discipline was thought to be the only method of strengthening command ; and the Russians quietly submitted

submitted to it, notwithstanding their natural bent to sedition ; and after the punishment, did their duty as usual. But the Dane thought in a different manner, and resolved to be revenged for the treatment he had received, and thereupon nailed up the cannon, deserted to the Turks, turned Mahometan, and defended Afoph, with great success, against his former masters. This instance shews, that the lenity which is now practised in Russia, is much preferable to the former severities ; and better calculated to retain those in their duty, who, by a good education, have a proper sense of honour. It was absolutely necessary, at that time, to use the utmost rigour towards the common people ; but since their manners have been changed, the empress Elizabeth* has completed by clemency, the work her father begun by the authority of the laws. This lenity has even been carried, by this princess, to a degree unexampled, in the history of any nation. She has promised, that, during her reign, no person shall be punished with death, and she has kept her word. She is the first sovereign who ever shewed so much regard for the lives of men. By an institution, equally prudent and humane, malefactors are now condemned to serve in the mines, and other public works ; by which means their very punishments prove of service to the state. In other countries, they know only how to put a crimi-

* The present reigning empress Catherine seems even to exceed her aunt in lenity, which, together with the superior qualifications of this princess, affords her people the most happy preface of a glorious reign ; and it is not without reason that the most sensible amongst them flatter themselves with the hopes, that under this august princess the Russian empire will arrive at its highest pinnacle of glory.

nal to death, with all the apparatus of execution, without being able to prevent the perpetration of crimes. The apprehension of death makes, perhaps, less impression on those miscreants, who are for the most part bred up in idleness, than the fear of punishment and hard labour, renewed every day.

To return to the siege of Asoph, which place was now defended by the same person who had before directed the attacks against it; the Russians, in vain, attempted to take it by storm; and after losing a great number of men, were obliged to raise the siege.

Perseverance in his undertakings, was the distinguishing character of Peter the Great. In the spring of 1696, he brought a still more considerable army before Asoph. About this time died czar John, his brother, who, tho' he had not, while living, been the least curb to Peter's authority, having enjoyed only the bare title of czar, yet he had been some restraint upon him in regard to appearances. The money which had been appropriated to the support of John's dignity and household, were now applied to the maintenance of the army. This proved no small help to a government, whose revenues were not near so great as they are present. Peter wrote to the emperor Leopold, to the states-general, and to the elector of Brandenburg, to obtain engineers, gunners, and seamen. He likewise took some Calmucks into his pay, whose light-horse are very useful against the Crim Tartars.

The most agreeable of the czar's successes, was that of his little fleet, which was at length completed and well commanded. It defeated the Turkish saicks, sent from Constantinople, and took

took some of them. The siege was carried on regularly by trenches, but not altogether in our method; the trenches being three times deeper than ours, with parapets as high as ramparts.

1696 At length the garrison surrendered the 28th of July, N. S. without being allowed the honour of war, or to carry out with them either arms or ammunition: they were likewise obliged to deliver up the renegado Jacob to the conquerors.

The czar immediately set about fortifying Afoph, built strong forts to protect it, and made a harbour capable of holding large vessels, with a design to make himself master of the Straights of Caffa, or the Cimmerian Bosphorus, which commands the entrance into the Pontus Euxinus, or Black Sea; places famous in ancient times, by the naval armaments of Mithridates. He left thirty-two armed saicks before Afoph*, and made all the necessary preparations for fitting out a fleet against the Turks, to consist of nine ships of sixty guns, and of forty-one, from thirty to fifty. He obliged his principal nobles and the richer merchants, to contribute towards this armament; and thinking that the estates of the clergy ought to help towards the common cause, he obliged the patriarch, the bishops, and the principal clergy, to pay down a sum of ready money to forward this expedition, in honour of their country, and the advantage of the christian faith. The Cossacks were employed in building a number of those light boats in use amongst them, and which were excellent for the purpose of cruizing on the coast of Crim Tartary. The Ottoman empire was alarmed at this powerful

* Le Fort's memoirs.

armament ; the first that had ever been attempted on the Palus Mæotis. The czar's scheme was to drive the Turks and the Tartars for ever out of the Taurica Chersonesus, and afterwards to establish a free and easy commerce with Persia through Georgia. This is the very trade which the Greeks formerly carried on to Colchos, and to this peninsula of Crim Tartary, which Peter now seemed on the point of conquering.

Having subdued the Turks and the Tartars, he was willing to accustom his people to splendid shews, as well as to military labour. He made his army to enter into Moscow, under triumphal arches, in the midst of superb fireworks, and every thing that could add to the lustre of the festival. The soldiers who had fought on board the Venetian saicks against the Turks, and who were a distinct corps of themselves, marched first. Marshal Scheremetow, the generals Gordon and Schein, admiral Le Fort, and the other general officers, all took the precedence of their monarch in this procession, who declared he had no rank in the army, being desirous to convince the nobility, by his example, that the only way to acquire military preferment, was to deserve it*.

* It is in consequence of this glorious and equitable distinction, that at this day we find nobility gives no precedence in the court of Russia : nor can the son of a prince appear there in any other rank, than that which his situation in the army gives him ; while a private citizen, who by his merit has raised himself above his condition, receives all the honours due to his post ; or more properly speaking, to the merit which obtained him that post. A reputation of this kind would methinks, he attended with great advantages, both in England and France, as it would be a means to raise in the youth of all ranks a virtuous and noble emulation.

This triumphal entry seemed somewhat a-kin to those of the ancient Romans, in which the conquerors were wont to expose the prisoners they had taken, to public view, and sometimes put them to death : In like manner, the slaves taken in this expedition, followed the army ; and the deserter Jacob, who had betrayed them, was drawn in an open cart, in which was a gibbet, to which his body was fastened after he had been broke upon the wheel.

On this occasion was struck the first medal in Russia, with this remarkable legend, in the language of the country : “ P E T E R the FIRST, “ august emperor of Muscovy.” On the reverse was the city of Asoph, with these words : “ Victorious by Fire and Water.”

Peter felt a sensible concern in the midst of all these successes, that his ships and gallies in the sea of Asoph, had been built entirely by the hands of foreigners : and wished as earnestly to have a harbour in the Baltic sea, as upon the Pontus Euxinus.

Accordingly, in the month of March 1677, he sent threescore young Russians of Le Fort's regiment, into Italy, most of them to Venice, and the rest to Leghorn, to instruct themselves in the naval art, and the manner of constructing gallies. He likewise sent forty others into Holland *, to learn the method of building and working large ships ; and others likewise into Germany, to serve in the land forces, and instruct themselves in the military discipline of that nation. At length he took a resolution to absent himself for a few years from his own domi-

* General Le Fort's MSS.

nions, in order to learn how to govern them the better. He had an irresistible inclination to improve himself by his own observation and practice in the knowledge of naval affairs, and of the several arts which he was so desirous to establish in his own country. He proposed to travel *incognito* thro' Denmark, Brandenburg, Holland, Vienna, Venice, and Rome. France and Spain were the only countries he did not take into his plan ; Spain, because the arts he was in quest of, were too much neglected there ; and France, because in that kingdom they reigned with too much ostentation, and that the parade and state of Lewis XIV. which had disgusted so many crowned heads, ill agreed with the private manner in which he proposed to travel. Moreover, he was in alliance with most of the powers, whose dominions he intended to visit, except those of France and Rome. He likewise remembered, with some degree of resentment, the little respect shewn by Lewis XIV. to his embassy in 1687, which had proved more famous than successful : and lastly, he already began to espouse the cause of Augustus, elector of Saxony, with whom the prince of Conti had lately entered into a competition for the crown of Poland.

C H A P. IX.

TRAVELS of PETER the GREAT.

1697. **H**AVING thus determined to visit the several countries and courts above-mentioned in a private character, he put himself into the retinue of three ambassadors, in the same manner as he had before mingled in the train of his generals at his triumphant entry into Moscow.

* The three ambassadors were, general Le Fort, the boyard Alexis Gollowin, commissary general of war, and governor of Siberia, the same who signed the perpetual treaty of peace with the plenipotentiaries of China, on the frontiers of that empire; and Wonitzin, diak, or secretary of state, who had been long employed in foreign courts. Four principal secretaries, twelve gentlemen, two pages for each ambassador, a company of fifty guards, (with their officers, all of the regiment of Preobrazinski, composed the chief retinue of his embassy, which consisted in the whole of two hundred persons: and the czar, reserving to himself only one valet de chambre, a servant in livery, and a dwarf, mingled with the crowd. It was a thing unparalleled in history, for a king of five and twenty years of age, to quit his dominions, in order to learn the art of governing. His victory over the Turks and Tartars, the splendour of his triumphant entry into Moscow, the

* The Petersburg memoirs, and memoirs of Le Fort.

number of foreign troops attached to his service, the death of his brother John, his copartner in the empire, and the confinement of the princess Sophia to a cloister, and above all the universal respect shewn to his person, seemed to assure him the tranquility of his kingdom during his absence. He intrusted the regency in the hands of the boyard Strechnef, and the knes or prince Romadonowski, who were to deliberate with the rest of the boyards in cases of importance.

Two troops raised by general Gordon remained behind in Moscow, to keep every thing quiet in that capital. Those Strelitzes, who were thought likely to create a disturbance, were distributed in the frontiers of Crim Tartary, to preserve the conquest of Asoph, and to check the incursions of the Tartars. Having provided against every incident, he gave a free scope to his passion and desire of improvement.

As this journey proved the cause, or at least the pretext, of the bloody war, which so long traversed, but in the end promoted all the designs of the czar; which drove Augustus king of Poland from the throne; placed that crown on the head of Stanislaus, and then stript him of it; which made Charles XII. king of Sweden, the first of conquerors for nine years, and the most unfortunate of kings for nine more; it is necessary, in order to enter into a detail of these events, to take a view of the state of Europe at that time.

Sultan Mustapha II. sat at that time on the Ottoman throne: the weakness of whose administration would not permit him to make any great efforts, either against Leopold, emperor of Germany, whose arms were successful in Hungary,

Hungary, nor against the czar, who had lately taken Asoph from him, and threatened to make himself master of the Pontus Euxinus ; nor even against the Venetians, who had made themselves masters of all the Peloponnesus.

John Sobiesky, king of Poland, for ever famous by the victory of Chocksim, and the deliverance of Vienna, died the 17th of June 1696, and the possession of that crown was in dispute between Augustus elector of Saxony, who obtained it, and Armond prince of Conti, who had only the honour of being elected.

1697. Sweden had lately lost, but without regret, Charles XI. her sovereign, who was the first king, who had ever been really absolute in that country, and who was the father of a prince still more so, and with whom all despotic power ceased. He left the crown to his son Charles XII. a youth of only fifteen years of age. This was in all appearance a conjuncture the most favourable for the czar's design : he had it in his power to extend his dominions on the gulph of Finland, and on the side of Livonia. But he did not think it enough to harass the Turks on the Black Sea ; the settlements on the Palus Mæotis, and the borders of the Caspian sea, were not sufficient to answer his schemes of navigation, commerce, and power. Besides, glory, which is the darling object of every reformer, was to be found neither in Persia nor in Turkey, but in our parts of Europe, where great talents are rendered immortal. In a word, Peter did not aim at introducing either the Persian or Turkish manners among his subjects.

Germany, then at war both with the Turks and with the French, and united with Spain, England,

England, and Holland, against the single power of Lewis XIV. was on the point of concluding peace, and the plenipotentiaries were already met at the castle of Ryfwick, in the neighbourhood of the Hague.

It was during this situation of affairs, that Peter and his ambassador began their journey in the month of April 1697, by the way of Great Novogorod: from thence they travelled through Esthonia and Livonia, provinces formerly disputed by the Russians, Swedes, and Poles, and which the Swedes at last acquired by superiority of arms.

The fertility of Livonia, and the situation of its capital Riga, were temptations to the czar, to possess himself of that country. He expressed a curiosity to see the fortifications of the citadel. But count D'Alberg, governor of Riga, taking umbrage at this request, refused him the satisfaction he desired, and affected to treat the embassy with contempt. This behaviour did not at all contribute to cool the inclination the czar might have, to make himself one day master of those provinces.

From Livonia they proceeded to Brandenburg Prussia, part of which had been inhabited by the ancient Vandals; Polish Prussia had been included in European Sarmatia. Brandenburg Prussia was a poor country, and badly peopled; but its elector, who afterwards took the name of king, displayed a magnificence on this occasion, equally new and destructive to his dominions. He piqued himself upon receiving this embassy in his city of Konigsberg, with all the pomp of royalty. The most sumptuous presents were made on both sides. The contrast between

tween the French dress, which the court of Berlin affected, and the long Asiatic robes of the Russians, with their caps buttoned up with pearls and diamonds, and their scimitars hanging at their belts, produced a singular effect. The czar was dressed after the German fashion. The prince of Georgia, who accompanied him, was clad in a Persian habit, which displayed a different magnificence. This is the same who was taken prisoner afterwards at the battle of Narva, and died in Sweden.

Peter despised all this ostentation; it was to have been wished, that he had shewn an equal contempt for the pleasures of the table, in which the Germans, at that time, placed their chief glory. It was at one of these entertainments*, then too much in fashion, and which are alike fatal to health and morality, that he drew his sword upon his favourite Le Fort; but he expressed as much contrition for this sudden sally of passion, as Alexander did for the murder of Clytus; he asked pardon of Le Fort, saying, that he wanted to reform his subjects, and could not yet reform himself. General Le Fort, in his manuscript, praises the czar more for this goodness of heart, than he blames him for his excess of passion.

The ambassadors then went through Pomerania and Berlin; and from thence, one part took its way through Magdebourg, and the other by Hambourg, a city which already began to be considerable by its extensive commerce, but not so rich and populous as it has become since. From thence they directed their route towards

* Le Fort's MS. memoirs.

Minden, crossed Westphalia, and at length, by the way of Cleves, arrived at Amsterdam.

The czar reached this city fifteen days before the ambassadors. At his first coming, he lodged in a house belonging to the East India company; but soon afterwards, he took a small apartment in the dock-yard, belonging to the admiralty. He then put on the habit of a Dutch skipper, and in that dress went to the village of Saardam, a place where a great many more ships were built at that time, than at present. This village is as large, as populous, and as rich, and much neater, than many opulent towns. The czar greatly admired the multitude of people who were constantly employed there, the order and regularity of their times of working, the prodigious dispatch with which they built and fitted out ships, the incredible number of ware-houses, and machines for the greater ease and security of labour. The czar began with purchasing a bark, to which he made a mast with his own hands; after that, he worked upon all the different parts in the construction of a vessel, living in the same manner as the workmen at Saardam, dressing and eating the same as them, and working in the forges, the rope-walks, and in the several mills, which are in prodigious numbers in that village, for sawing timber, extracting oil, making paper, and wire-drawing. He caused himself to be enrolled in the list of carpenters, by the name of Peter Michaelhoff, and was commonly called Peter Bas, or Master Peter: the workmen were at first confounded at having a crowned head for a fellow-labourer, but soon became familiarised to the sight.

While

While he was thus handling the compass and the axe at Saardam, a confirmation was brought him of the division in Poland, and of the double nomination of the elector Augustus, and the prince of Conti. The carpenter of Saardam immediately promised king Augustus to assist him with 30,000 men, and from his work loft issued out orders to his army that was assembled in the Ukraine against the Turks.

11th Aug. 1697.] His troops gained a victory over the Tartars near Asoph, and a few months afterwards took from them the city of Or, or Orkapi, which we call Precop*. As to himself he still continued improving in different arts: he went frequently from Saardam to Amsterdam, to hear the lectures of the celebrated anatomist Ruysch, and made himself master of several operations in surgery, which, in case of necessity, might be of use both to himself and his officers. He went through a course of natural philosophy, in the house of the burgo-master Wizen, a person for ever estimable for his patriotic virtue, and the noble use he made of his immense riches, which he distributed like a citizen of the world, sending men of abilities, at a great expence, to all parts of the globe, in search of whatever was most rare and valuable, and fitting out vessels at his own charge to make new discoveries.

Peter Bas gave a truce to his labours for a short time, but it was only to pay a private visit

* Precop, or Perekop, once a fortress on the Isthmus, which joins the peninsula of Crim Tartary to the mainland of little Tartary in European Turkey, and thence considered at the key to that country. It has its name from the ditches cut across for the defence of the peninsula.

at Utrecht, and at the Hague, to William king of England, and stadtholder of the United provinces. General Le Fort was the only one admitted to the private conference of the two monarchs. Peter assisted afterwards at the public entry of his ambassadors, and at their audience: they presented in his name to the deputy of the states 600 of the most beautiful fables that could be procured; and the states, over and above the customary presents on these occasions, of a gold chain and a medal, gave them three magnificent coaches. They received the first visits of all the plenipotentiaries who were at the congress of Ryswick, excepting those of France, to whom they had not notified their arrival, not only because the czar espoused the cause of Augustus against the prince of Conti, but also because king William, whose friendship he was desirous of cultivating, was averse to a peace with France.

At his return to Amsterdam, he resumed his former occupations, and completed with his own hands a ship of sixty guns, that he had begun himself, and sent her to Archangel, which was the only port he had at that time on the ocean.

He not only engaged in his service several French refugees, Swiss, and Germans; but he also sent all sorts of artists over to Moscow, and he previously made a trial of their several abilities himself. There were few trades or arts which he did not perfectly well understand in their minutest branches: he took a particular pleasure in correcting, with his hands, the geographical maps, which at that time laid down at hazard the positions of the towns and rivers in his vast dominions, then very little known. There is still

still preserved, a map, on which he marked out, with his own hand, his projected communication of the Caspian and Black seas, the execution of which he had given in charge to Mr. Brekel, a German engineer. The junction of these two seas was indeed a less difficult enterprise than that of the Ocean and Mediterranean, which was effected in France; but the very idea of joining the sea of Asoph with the Caspian, astonished the imagination at that time: but new establishments in that country became the object of his attention in proportion as his successes begat new hopes.

His troops, commanded by general Shein and prince Dolgorowski, had lately gained a victory over the Tartars near Asoph, and ^{July} likewise over a body of Janissaries sent ^{1696.} by sultan Mustapha to their assistance. This success served to make him more respected, even by those who blamed him as a sovereign, for having quitted his dominions, to turn workman at Amsterdam. They now saw, that the affairs of the monarch did not suffer by the labours of the philosopher, the traveller, and the artificer.

He remained at Amsterdam, constantly employed in his usual occupations of ship-building, engineering, geography, and the practice of natural philosophy, till the middle of January 1698, and then he set out for England, but still as one of the retinue of his ambassadors.

King William sent his own yacht to meet him, and two ships of war as convoy. In England, he observed the same manner of living as at Amsterdam and Saardam; he took an apartment near the king's dock-yard at Dept-
G 3 ford.

ford, where he applied himself wholly to gain instruction. The Dutch builders had only taught him their method, and the practical part of ship-building. In England, he found the art better explained; for there they work according to mathematical proportion. He soon made himself so perfect in this science, that he was able to give lessons to others. He began to build a ship according to the English method of construction, and it proved a prime sailer. The art of watch-making, which was already brought to perfection in London, next attracted his attention, and he made himself compleat master of the whole theory: captain Perry, the engineer, who followed him from London to Russia, says, that from the casting of cannon, to the spinning of ropes, there was not any one branch of trade belonging to a ship that he did not minutely observe, and even put his hand to, as often as he came into the places where those trades were carried on.

In order to cultivate his friendship, he was allowed to engage several English artificers into his service, as he had done in Holland; but over and above artificers, he engaged likewise some mathematicians, which he would not so easily have found in Amsterdam. Ferguson, a Scotchman, an excellent geometrician, entered into his service, and was the first person who brought arithmetic into use in the exchequer in Russia, where, before that time, they made use only of the Tartarian method of reckoning, with balls strung upon a wire; a method which supplied the place of writing, but was very perplexing and imperfect, because, after the calculation, there was no method of proving it, in order to discover
any

any error. The Indian cyphers, which are now in use, were not introduced amongst us, till the ninth century, by Arabs; and they did not make their way into the Russian empire, till one thousand years afterwards. Such has been the fate of the arts, to make their progress slowly round the globe. He took with him two young students from a mathematical school *, and this was the beginning of the marine academy, founded afterwards by Peter the Great. He observed and calculated eclipses with Ferguson. Perry the engineer, tho' greatly discontented at not being sufficiently rewarded, acknowledges, that Peter made himself a proficient in astronomy; that he perfectly well understood the motions of the heavenly bodies, as well as the laws of gravitation, by which they are directed. This force, now so evidently demonstrated, and before the time of the great Newton so little known, by which all the planets gravitate towards each other, and which retained them in their orbits, was already become familiar to a sovereign of Russia, while other countries amused themselves with imaginary vortices, and, in Galileo's nation, one set of ignorant persons, ordered others, as ignorant, to believe the earth to be immovable.

Perry set out in order to effect a communication between rivers, to build bridges, and construct sluices. The czar's plan was to open a communication by means of canals between the Ocean, the Caspian, and the Black Seas.

* These were two scholars from Christ church hospital, commonly called blue-coat boys.

We must not forget to observe, that a set of English merchants, with the marquis of Caermarthen * at their head, gave Peter 15,000 pounds sterling, for the permission of vending tobacco in Russia. The patriarch, by a mistaken severity, had interdicted this branch of trade; for the Russian church forbid smoking, as an unclean and sinful action. Peter, who knew better things, and who, amongst his many projected changes, meditated a reformation of the church, introduced this commodity of trade into his dominions.

Before Peter left England, he was entertained by king William with a spectacle worthy such a guest: this was a mock sea-fight. Little was it then imagined, that the czar would one day fight a real battle on this element against the Swedes, and gain naval victories in the Baltic. In fine, William made him a present of the vessel in which he used to go over to Holland, called the Royal Transport, a beautiful yacht, and magnificently adorned. In this vessel Peter returned to Holland the latter end of 1698, taking with him three captains of ships of war, five and twenty captains of merchant ships, forty lieutenants, thirty pilots, as many surgeons, two hundred and fifty gunners, and upwards of three hundred artificers. This little colony of persons skilful in all branches, sailed from Holland to Archangel, on board the Royal Transport, and from thence were distributed into all the different places where their services were

* The czar was particularly fond of this nobleman, because he was a great lover of maritime affairs, frequently rowed and sailed with him upon the water, and gave him what information he could concerning shipping.

necessary. Those who had been engaged at Amsterdam, went by the way of Narva, which then belonged to the Swedes.

While he was thus transplanting the arts and manufactures of England and Holland into his own country, the officers, whom he had sent to Rome, and other places in Italy, had likewise engaged some artists in his service. General Sheremetow, who was at the head of his embassy to Italy, took the tour of Rome, Naples, Venice, and Malta, while the czar proceeded to Vienna with his other ambassadors. He had now only to view the military discipline of the Germans, after having seen the English fleets, and the dock-yards of Holland. Politics had likewise as great a share in this journey as the desire of instruction. The emperor was his natural ally against the Turks. Peter had a private audience of Leopold, and the two monarchs conferred standing, to avoid the trouble of ceremony.

There happened nothing worthy remark during his stay at Vienna, except the celebration of the ancient feast of the landlord and landlady, which had been disused for a considerable time, and which Leopold thought proper to revive upon the czar's account. This feast, which, by the Germans, is called Wurtchafft, is celebrated in the following manner:

The emperor is landlord, and the empress landlady, the king of the Romans, the archdukes and the archduchesses are generally their assistants: they entertain people of all nations as their guests, who come drest after the most ancient fashion of their respective countries: those who are invited to the feast, draw lots for

tickets, on each of which is written the name of the nation, and the character the person they are to represent. One perhaps draws a ticket for a Chinese mandarin; another for a Tartarian Mirza; a third a Persian satrap; and a fourth for a Roman senator; a princess may, by her ticket, be a gardner's wife, or a milk-maid; a prince a peasant, or a common soldier. Dances are composed suitable to all these characters, and the landlord and landlady with their family wait at table. Such was the ancient institution; but on this occasion * Joseph king of the Romans, and the countess of Traun, represented the ancient Egyptians. The archduke Charles, and the countess of Walstein, were dressed like Flemings in the time of Charles the Fifth. The archduchess Mary-Elizabeth, and count Traun, were in the habits of Tartars; the archduchess Josephina, and the count of Workflaw, were habited like Persians, and the archduchess Mariamne, and prince Maximilian of Hanover, in the character of North-Holland peasants. Peter appeared in the dress of a Friesland boor, and all who spoke to him addressed him in that character, at the same time talking to him of the great czar of Muscovy. These are trifling particulars; but whatever revives the remembrance of ancient manners and customs, is in some degree worthy of being recorded.

Peter was ready to set out from Vienna, in order to proceed to Venice, to compleat his tour of instruction, when he received the news of a rebellion, which had lately broke out, in his dominions.

* Le Fort's MSS. and those of Petersburg.

C H A P. X.

A CONSPIRACY punished.

The corps of STRELITZES abolished, alterations in customs, manners, church, and state.

CZAR Peter, when he left his dominions to set out on his travels, had provided against every incident, even that of a rebellion. But the great and serviceable things he had done for his country, proved the very cause of this rebellion.

Certain old boyards, to whom the ancient customs were still dear, and some precepts, to whom the new ones appeared little better than sacrilege, began these disturbances, and the old faction of the princess Sophia took this opportunity to rouse itself anew. It is said, that one of her sisters, who was confined to the same monastery, contributed not a little to excite these seditions. Care was taken to spread abroad the danger to be feared from the introduction of foreigners to instruct the nation. In short, who would believe, that* the permission which the czar had given to import tobacco into his empire, contrary to the inclination of the clergy, was one of the chief motives of the insurrection? Superstition, the scourge of every country, and yet the darling of the multitude, spread itself from the common people to the Strelitzes, who had been scattered on the frontiers of Lithuania: they assembled in a body, and marched towards Moscow, with the intent to place the princess Sophia on the throne, and for ever to prevent

* Le Fort's MSS.

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* Le Fort's MSS.

the return of a czar who had violated the established customs †, by presuming to travel for instruction among foreigners. The forces commanded by Schein and Gordon, who were much better disciplined than the Strelitzes, met them fifteen leagues from Moscow, gave them battle, and entirely defeated them: but this advantage gained by a foreign general over the ancient militia, among whom were several of the burghers of Moscow, contributed still more to irritate the people.

To quell these tumults, the czar sets out privately from Vienna, passes through Poland, has a private interview with Augustus, concert measures with that prince for extending the Russian dominions on the side of the Baltick, and at length arrived at Moscow, where he surprised every one with his presence: he 1698. then confers rewards on the troops who had defeated the Strelitzes, of whom the prisons were now full. If the crimes of these unhappy wretches were great, their punishment was no less so. Their leaders, with several of their

† A most extraordinary instance of the obstinate attachment of the Russians to their old customs, happened in the time of the czar Basilowitz, and undoubtedly influenced him not a little in the severity with which he treated his people. The king of Poland, Stephen Battori, having recovered Livonia, went himself into that province to establish a new form of government; according to the constant custom there. When any peasant, all of whom were treated as slaves, had committed a fault, he was whipped with a rod till the blood came. The king was willing to commute this barbarous punishment for one that was more moderate; but the peasants, insensible of the favour designed them, threw themselves at his feet, and intreated him not to make any alterations in their ancient customs, because they had experienced, that all innovations, far from procuring them the least redress, had always made their burthen sit the heavier on them.

officers and priests, were condemned to death; some were broke upon the wheel *, and two women were buried alive; upwards of two thousand of the Strelitzes were executed, part of whom were hung round about the walls of the city, and others put to death in different manners, and their dead bodies remained exposed for two days in the high roads †, particularly about the monastery where the princesses Sophia and Eudocia resided ‡. Monuments of stone were erected, on which their crimes and punishments were set forth. A great number of them who had wives and children at Moscow, were dispersed with their families into Siberia, the kingdom of Astracan, and the county of Asoph. This punishment was at least of service to the state, as they helped to cultivate and people a large tract of waste land.

Perhaps, if the czar had not found it absolutely necessary to make such terrible examples, he might have employed part of those Strelitzes, whom he put to death, upon the public works; whereas they were now lost both to him and the

* Memoirs of captain Perry the engineer, employed by Peter the Great in Russia, and MSS. of Le Fort.

† Captain Perry, in p. 184 of his memoirs, says, that these executions being performed in the depth of winter, their bodies were immediately frozen: those who were beheaded, were ordered to be left in the same posture as when executed, in ranks upon the ground, with their heads lying by them: and those who were hanged round the three walls of the city, were left hanging the whole winter, to the view of the people, till the warm weather began to come on in the spring, when they were taken down and buried together in a pit, to prevent infection. This author adds, that there were other gibbets placed on all the public roads leading to Moscow, where others of these rebels were hanged.

‡ MSS. of Le Fort.

state : the lives of men ought to be held in great estimation, especially in a country where the encrease of inhabitants ought to have been the principal care of the legislator ; but he thought it necessary to terrify and break the spirit of the nation by executions, and the parade attending them. The entire corps of the Strelitzes, whose number not one of his predecessors had even dared to think of diminishing, was broke for ever, and their very name abolished. This change was effected without any resistance, because matters had been properly prepared beforehand. The Turkish sultan, Osman, as I have already remarked, was deposed and murdered in the same century, only for giving the Janissaries room to suspect that he intended to lessen their number. Peter had better success, because he had taken better measures,

Of this powerful and numerous body of the Strelitzes, he left only two feeble regiments, from whom there could no longer be any danger ; and yet these still retaining their old spirit of mutiny, revolted again in Astracan, in the year 1705, but were quickly suppressed.

But while we are relating Peter's severity in this affair of state, let us not forget to commemorate the more than equal humanity he shewed some time afterwards, when he lost his favourite Le Fort, who was snatched away by an untimely fate, March 12, N. S. 1699, at the age of 46. He paid him the same funeral honours as are bestowed on the greatest sovereigns, and assisted himself in the procession, carrying a pike in his hand, and marching after the captains, in the rank of a lieutenant, which he held in the deceased general's regiment, hereby setting an example

ample to his nobles, of the respect due to merit and the military rank.

After the death of Le Fort, it appeared plainly, that the changes in the state were not owing to that general, but to the czar himself. Peter had indeed been confirmed in his design, by his several conversations with Le Fort; but he had formed and executed them all without his assistance.

As soon as he had suppressed the Strelitzes, he established regular regiments on the German model, who were all cloated in a short and commodious uniform, in the room of those long and troublesome coats, which they used to wear before; and, at the same time, their exercise was likewise more regular.

The regiment of Preobrazinski guards were already formed: it had taken its name from the first company of fifty men, whom the czar had trained up in his younger days, in his retreat at Preobrazinski, at the time when his sister Sophia governed the state, and the other regiment of guards was also established.

As he had himself passed thro' the lowest degrees in the army, he was resolved that the sons of his boyards and great men, should serve as common soldiers before they were made officers. He sent some of the young nobility on board his fleet at Woronitz and Asoph, where he obliged them to serve their apprenticeship as common seamen. No one dared to dispute the commands of a master, who had himself set the example. The English and Dutch he had brought over with him, were employed in equipping this fleet for sea, in constructing sluices, and building docks, for careening the ships, and to resume the
great

great work of joining the Tanais or Don, and the Wolga, which had been dropped by Brekel the German. And now he began to set about his projected reformatations in the council of state, in the revenue, in the church, and even in society itself.

The affairs of the revenue had been hitherto administered much in the same manner as in Turkey. Each boyard paid a stipulated sum for his lands, which he raised upon the peasants, his vassals; the czar appointed certain burghers and burgomasters, to be his receivers, who were not powerful enough to claim the right of paying only such sums as they thought proper, into the public treasury. This new administration of the finances, was what cost him the most trouble: he was obliged to try several methods before he could fix upon a proper one.

The reformation of the church, which in all other countries is looked upon as so dangerous and difficult an attempt, was not so to him. The patriarchs had at times opposed the authority of the crown, as well as the Strelitzes; Nikon with insolence, Joachin, one of his successors, in an artful manner.

The bishops had arrogated the power of life and death, a prerogative directly contrary to the spirit of religion, and the subordination of government. This assumed power, which had been of long standing, was now taken from them. The patriarch Adrian, dying at the close of this century, Peter declared that there should for the future be no other.

This dignity then was entirely suppressed, and the great income belonging thereto was united to the public revenue, which stood in need of this

this addition. Although the czar did not set himself up as head of the Russian church, as the kings of Great Britain have done in regard to the church of England; yet he was, in fact, absolute master over it, because the synods did not dare either to disobey the commands of a despotic sovereign, or to dispute with a prince who had more knowledge than themselves.

We need only to cast an eye on the preamble to the edict, concerning his ecclesiastical regulations, issued in 1721, to be convinced that he acted at once as master and legislator: "We should deem ourselves guilty of ingratitude to the most high, if, after having reformed the military and civil orders, we neglected the spiritual, &c. For this cause, following the example of the most ancient kings, who have been famed for piety, we have taken upon us to make certain wholesome regulations, touching the clergy." It is true, he convened a synod for carrying into execution his ecclesiastical degrees; but the members of this synod, at entering upon their office, were to take an oath, the form of which had been drawn up and signed by himself. This was an oath of submission and obedience, and was conceived in the following terms: "I swear to be a faithful and obedient servant and subject to my true and natural sovereign, and to the august successors whom it shall please him to nominate, in virtue of the incontestable right of which he is possessed: I acknowledge him to be the supreme judge of this spiritual college: I swear by the all-seeing God, that I understand and mean this oath in the full force and sense, which the words convey to those who read
" or

“ or hear it.” This oath is much stronger than that of the supremacy in England. The Russian monarch was not, indeed, one of the fathers of the synod, but he dictated their laws; and though he did not touch the holy censer, he directed the hands that held it.

Previous to this great work, he thought, that in a state like his, which stood in need of being peopled, the celibacy of the monks was contrary to nature, and to the public good. It was the ancient custom of the Russian church, for secular priests to marry at least once in their lives; they were even obliged so to do: and formerly they ceased to be priests as soon as they lost their wives. But that a multitude of young people of both sexes, should make a vow of living useless in a cloister, and at the expence of others, appeared to him a dangerous institution. He, therefore, ordered, that no one should be admitted to a monastic life, till they were fifty years old, a time of life very rarely subject to a temptation of this kind; and he forbid any person to be admitted, of what age soever, who was actually in possession of any public employ.

This regulation has been repealed since his death, because the government has thought proper to shew more complaisance to the monasteries: but the patriarchal dignity has never been revived, and its great revenues are now appropriated to the payment of the troops.

These alterations at first excited some murmurings. A certain priest wrote, to prove that Peter was antichrist, because he would not admit of a patriarch; and the art of printing, which the czar encouraged in his kingdoms, was made use of to publish libels against him: but on the other

other hand, there was another priest who started up, to prove that Peter could not be antichrist, because the number 666 was not to be found in his name, and that he had not the sign of the Beast. All complaints, however, were soon quieted. Peter, in fact, gave much more to the church, than he took from it; for he made the clergy, by degrees, more regular and more learned. He founded three colleges at Moscow, where they teach the languages, and where those who are designed for the priesthood are obliged to study.

One of the most necessary reforms, was the suppression, or at least the mitigation of the Three Lents, an ancient superstition of the Greek church, and as prejudicial with respect to those who are employed in public works, and especially to soldiers, as was the old Jewish superstition of not fighting on the sabbath day. Accordingly the czar dispensed with his workmen and soldiers at least observing these Lents, in which, though they were not permitted to eat, they were accustomed to get drunk. He likewise dispensed with their observance of meagre days, the chaplains of the fleet and army were obliged to set the example, which they did without much reluctance.

The calendar, another important object, formerly, in all the countries of the world, the chiefs of religion had the care of regulating the year, not only on account of the feasts to be observed, but because, in ancient times, the priests were the only persons who understood astronomy.

The year began with the Russians on the first of September. Peter ordered, that it should for the future commence the first day of January, as
among

among the other nations of Europe. This alteration was to take place in the year 1700, at the beginning of the century, which he celebrated by a jubilee, and other grand solemnities. It was a matter of surprize to the common people, how the czar should be able to change the course of the sun. Some obstinate persons, persuaded that God had created the world in September, continued their old stile: but the alteration took place in all the public offices, in the whole court of chancery, and in a little time throughout the whole empire. Peter did not adopt the Gregorian calander, because it had been rejected by the English mathematicians; but which must, nevertheless, be one day received in all countries.

Ever since the fifth century, the time when letters first came into use amongst them, they had been accustomed to write upon long rolls, made either of the bark of trees, or of parchment, and afterwards of paper; and the czar was obliged to publish an edict, ordering every one, for the future, to write after our manner.

The reformation now became general. Their marriages were made formerly after the same manner as in Turkey and Persia, where the bridegroom does not see his bride till the contract is signed, and they can no longer go from their words. This custom may do well enough amongst those people, where polygamy prevails, and where the women are always shut up; but it is a very bad one in countries where a man is confined to one wife, and where divorces are seldom allowed.

The czar was unwilling to accustom his people to the manners and customs of the nations, which

which he had visited in his travels, and from whence he had taken the masters, who were now instructing them.

It appeared necessary, that the Russians should not be dressed in a different manner from those who were teaching them the arts and sciences; because the aversion to strangers, which is but too natural to mankind, is not a little kept up by a difference of dress. The full dress, which at that time partook of the fashions of the Poles, the Tartars, and the ancient Hungarians, was, as we have elsewhere observed, very noble; but the dress of the burghers and common people resembled those jackets plated round the waste, which are still given to the poor children in some of the French hospitals*. In general, the robe was formerly the dress of all nations, as being a garment that required the least trouble and art; and for the same reason, the beard was suffered to grow. The czar met with but little difficulty in introducing our mode of dress, and the custom of shaving among his courtiers; but the people was more obstinate, and he found himself obliged to lay a tax on long coats and beards. Patterns of close-bodied coats were hung up in public places; and whoever refused to pay the tax, were obliged to suffer their robes, and their beards, to be curtailed: all this was done in a jocular manner, and this air of pleasantry prevented seditions.

It has ever been the aim of all legislators, to render mankind more sociable; but it is not sufficient to effect this end, that they live together in towns; there must be a mutual intercourse of

* Somewhat like those of our blue-coat boys in England.
civility,

civility. This intercourse sweetens all the bitterness of life. The czar, therefore, introduced those assemblies, which the Italians call *ridotti*. To these assemblies he invited all the ladies of his court, with their daughters; and they were to appear dressed after the fashions of the southern nations of Europe. He was even himself at the pains of drawing up rules for all the little decors to be observed at these social entertainments. Thus, even to good breeding among his subjects, all was his own work, and that of time.

To make his people relish these innovations the better, he abolished the word *golut*, *slave*, always made use of by the Russians when they addressed their czar, or presented any petition to him; and ordered, that, for the future, they should make use of the word *raab*, which signifies *subject*. This alteration in no wise diminished the obedience due to the sovereign, and yet was the most ready means of conciliating their affections. Every month produced some new change or institution. He carried his attention even to the ordering painted posts to be set up in the road betwixt Moscow and Woronitz, to serve as mile stones at the distance of every verst; that is to say, every seven hundred paces, and had a kind of caravanseras, or public inns, built at the end of every twentieth verst.

While he was thus extending his cares to the common people, to the merchants, and to the traveller, he thought proper to make an addition to the pomp and splendor of his own court. For tho' he hated pomp or shew in his own person, he thought it necessary in those about him. He, there-

therefore, instituted the order of St. Andrew †, in imitation of the several orders with which all the courts of Europe abound. Golowin, who succeeded Le Fort in the dignity of high admiral, was the first knight of this order. It was esteemed an high reward, to have the honour of being admitted a member. It was a kind of badge that entitled the person who bore it, to the respect of the people. This mark of honour costs nothing to the sovereign, and flatters the self-love of a subject, without rendering him too powerful.

These many useful innovations were received with applause by the wiser part of the nation; and the murmurings and complaints of those who adhered to the ancient customs, were drowned in the acclamations of men of sound judgment.

While Peter was thus beginning a new creation in the interior part of his state, he concluded an advantageous truce with the Turks, which gave him the liberty to extend his territories on another side. Mustapha the Second, who had been defeated by prince Eugene, at the battle of Zeuta in 1697, stripped of the Morea by the Venetians, and unable to defend Asoph, was obliged to make peace with his victorious enemies, which peace was concluded at Carlowitz, between Peterwaradin and Sallankamon, places made famous by his 1699. defeats. Temeswaer was made the boundary of the German possessions, and of the Ottoman dominions. Kaminieck was restored to the Poles, the Morea, and some towns in

† 20th Sept. 1698. It is to be observed, that I always follow the new stile in my dates.

Dalmatia, which had been taken by the Venetians, remained in their hands for some time; and Peter the First continued in possession of Cafaph, and of a few forts built in its neighbourhood.

It was not possible for the czar to extend his dominions on the side of Turkey, without drawing upon him the forces of that empire, before divided, but now united. His naval projects were too vast for the Palus Mæotis, and the settlements on the Caspian sea would not admit of a fleet of men of war: he therefore, turned his views towards the Baltic sea, but without relinquishing those in regard to the Tanais and Wolga.

CHAP. XI.

War with S W E D E N.

The Battle of NARVA.

1700. **A** GRAND scene was now opened on the frontiers of Sweden. One of the principal causes of all the revolutions which happened from Ingria, as far as Dresden, and which laid waste so many countries for the space of eighteen years, was the abuse of the supreme power, by Charles XI. king of Sweden, father of Charles XII. This is a fact which cannot be too often repeated, as it concerns every crowned head, and the subjects of every nation: almost all Livonia, with the whole of Esthonia, had been ceded by the Poles to Charles XI. king of Sweden, who succeeded Charles X.

X. exactly at the time of the treaty of Oliva. It was ceded in the customary manner, with a reservation of rights and privileges. Charles XII. shewing little regard to these privileges, John Reinhold Patkul, a gentleman of Livonia, came to Stockholm in 1692, at the head of six deputies from the province, and laid their complaints at the foot of the throne, in respectful, but strong terms †. Instead of an answer, the deputies were ordered to be imprisoned, and Patkul was condemned to lose his honour and his life; but he lost neither, for he made his escape to the country of Vaud, in Swisserland, where he remained some time; when he afterwards was informed, that Augustus, elector of Saxony, had promised at his accession to the throne of Poland, to recover the provinces that had been wrested from that kingdom; he hastened to Dresden, to represent to that prince, how easily he might make himself master of Livonia, and revenge upon a king, only seventeen years of age, the losses that Poland had sustained by his ancestors.

At this very time czar Peter entertained thoughts of seizing upon Ingria and Carelia. These provinces had formerly belonged to the Russians, but the Swedes had made themselves masters of them by force of arms, in the time of the false Demetrius's, and had retained the possession of them by treaties: another war and

† Norberg, chaplain and confessor to Charles XII. says in his history, "That he had the insolence to complain of oppressions, and that he was condemned to lose his honour and life." This is speaking like the high priest of despotism, He should have observed, that no one can deprive a citizen of his honour, for doing his duty.

new treaties might restore them again to Russia. Patkul went from Dresden to Moscow, and by exciting up the two monarchs to avenge his private causes, he cemented a close union between them, and directed their preparations for invading all the places, situated to the east and south of Finland.

Just at this period, the new king of Denmark, Frederick IV. entered into an alliance with the czar and the king of Poland, against Charles, the young king of Sweden, who seemed in no condition to withstand their united forces. Patkul had the satisfaction of besieging the Swedes in Riga, the capital of Livonia, and directing the attack in quality of major-general.

The czar marched near ninety thousand men into Ingria. It is true, that, in this numerous army, he had not more than twelve thousand good soldiers, being those he had disciplined himself; namely, the two regiments of guards, and some few others, the rest being a badly armed militia, with some Cossacks, and Circassian Tartars; but he carried with him a train of 145 pieces of cannon. He laid siege to Narva, a small town in Ingria, that had a very commodious harbour, and it was generally thought the place would prove an easy conquest.

Sept.] It is known to all Europe, how Charles XII. when not quite eighteen years of age, made head against all his enemies, and attacked them one after another; he entered Denmark, put an end to the war in that kingdom in less than six weeks, sent succours to Riga, obliged the enemy to raise the siege, and marched against the Russians encamped before Narva, through

through the midst of ice and snow, in the month of November.

The czar, who looked upon Narva as already in his possession, was gone to Novogorod, and had taken with him his favourite, Menzikoff, then a lieutenant in the company of Bombardiers, of the Preobazinski 18 Nov. regiment, and afterwards raised to the rank of field marshal, and prince; a man whose singular fortunes entitle him to be spoken of more at large in another place.

Peter left the command of the army, with his instructions for the siege, with the prince of Croy; whose family came from Flanders, and who had lately entered into the czar's service *. Prince Dolgorouki acted as commissary of the army. The jealousy between those two chiefs, and the absence of the czar, were partly the occasion of the unparalleled defeat at Narva.

Charles XII. having landed at Pernau in Livonia with his troops, in the month of October advanced northward to Revel, where he defeated an advanced body of Russians. He continued his march, and meeting with another body routed that likewise. The run-aways returned to the camp before Narva, which they filled with consternation. The month of November was now far advanced; Narva, though unskillfully besieged, was on the point of surrendering. The young king of Sweden had not at that time above 9000 men with him, and could bring only six pieces of cannon to oppose to an hundred and forty-five, with which the Russian entrenchments were defended. All the

* See the history of Charles XI.

relations of that time, and all historians without exception, concur in making the Russian army then before Narva, amount to 80,000 men. The memoirs with which I have been furnished say 60,000; be that as it may, it is certain, that Charles had not quite 9000, and that this battle was one of those, which have proved, that the greatest victories have been frequently gained by inferior numbers, ever since the famed one of Arbèles *.

Charles did not hesitate one moment to attack with his small troop this army, so greatly superior; and taking advantage of a violent wind, and a great storm of snow, which blew directly in the faces of the Russians; Nov. 30. he attacked their entrenchments under cover of some pieces of cannon, which he had posted advantageously for the purpose. The Russians had not time to form themselves in the midst of that cloud of snow, that beat full in their faces, and astonished by the discharge of cannon, that they could not see; and never imagined how small a number they had to oppose.

The duke de Croy attempted to give his orders, but prince Dolgorouki would not receive them. The Russian officers rose upon the German officers; the duke's secretary, with colonel Lyon, and several others, were murdered. Every one abandoned his post, and tumult, confusion, and a panic terror, spread through the whole army. The Swedish troops had nothing

* A town on the river Lycus, in the province of Assyria, now called Curdestan, where Alexander the Great fought his third and decisive battle with Darius king of Persia.

more to do, but to cut in pieces those who were flying. Some threw themselves into the river Narva, where great numbers were drowned; others threw down their arms, and fell upon their knees before the conquering Swedes.

The duke de Croy, general Alland, and the rest of the general officers, dreading the Russians more than the Swedes, went in a body and surrendered themselves prisoners to count Steinbok. The king of Sweden now made himself master of all the artillery. Thirty thousand of the vanquished enemy laid down their arms at his feet, and filed off bare-headed and disarmed before him. Prince Dolgorouki, and all the Russian generals, came and surrendered themselves, as well as the Germans, but did not know till after they had surrendered, that they had been conquered by 8000 men. Amongst the prisoners, was the son of a king of Georgia, whom Charles sent to Stockholm: his name was Mittelefky Czarovits, or czar's son, an additional proof that the title of czar, or tzar, had not its original from the Roman Cæsars.

Charles XII. did not lose more than 1200 men in this battle. The czar's journal, which has been sent me from Petersbourg, says, that including those who died at the siege of Narva, and in the battle, and those who were drowned in their flight, the Russians lost no more than 6000 men. Want of discipline, and a panic that seized the army, did all the work of that fatal day. The number of those made prisoners of war, was four times greater than that of the conquerors; and if we may believe Norberg*, count Piper, who was afterwards taken

*Vol. I. p. 439, of the 4th edition printed at the Hague.

prisoner by the Russians, reproached them, that the number of their people made prisoners in the battle, exceeded by eight times the number of the whole Swedish army. If this is truth, the Swedes must have made upwards of 72,000 prisoners. This shews how seldom writers are well informed of particular circumstances. One thing, however, equally incontestable and extraordinary is, that the king of Sweden permitted one half of the Russian soldiers to retire back, after having disarmed them, and the other half to repair the river, with their arms; by this unaccountable presumption, restoring to the czar troops that, being afterwards well disciplined, became invincible ‡.

Charles had all the advantages that could result from a complete victory. Immense magazines, transports loaded with provisions, posts evacuated or taken, and the whole country at the mercy of the Swedish army, were consequences of the fortune of this day. Narva was now relieved, the shattered remains of the Russian army did not show themselves; the whole country as far as Pleskow lay open; the czar seemed bereft of all resource for carrying on the war; and the king of Sweden, victor in less than twelve months over the monarchs of Denmark, Poland, and Russia, was looked upon as the first prince in Europe, at an age when after princes hardly presume to aspire at reputation.

* The chaplain Norberg pretends, that, immediately after the battle, the Grand Seigneur wrote a letter of congratulation to the king of Sweden, in these terms. "The Sultan
"Bassa, by the grace of God, to Charles XII, &c. The letter was dated from the æra of the creation of the world.

But

But the unshaken constancy that made a part of Peter's character, prevented him from being discouraged in any of his projects.

A Russian bishop composed a prayer to St. Nicholas *, on account of this defeat, which was publicly read in all the churches throughout Russia. This composition shews the spirit of the times, and the inexpressible ignorance from which Peter delivered his country. Amongst other things, it says, that the furious and terrible Swedes were forcerers; and complains that St. Nicholas had entirely abandoned his Russians. The prelates of that country would blush to write such stuff at present; and, without any offence to the holy St. Nicholas, the people soon perceived that Peter was the most proper person to be applied to, to retrieve their losses.

* This prayer is printed in most of the journals and historical pieces of those times. And is inserted in the History of Charles XII. King of Sweden.

C H A P. XII.

Resources after the battle of Narva. That disaster entirely repaired. Peter gains a victory near the same place. The person who was afterwards empress, made prisoner at the storming of a town. Peter's successes. His triumph at Moscow*.

The years 1701 and 1702.

THE czar having, as has been already observed, quitted his army before Narva, in the end of November 1700, in order to go and concert matters with the king of Poland, received the news of the victory gained by the Swedes as he was on his way. His constancy in all emergencies was equal to the intrepidity and valour of Charles. He deferred the conference with Augustus, and hastened to repair the disordered state of his affairs. The scattered troops rendezvoused at great Novogorod, and from thence marched to Pleskow on the Lake Peipus.

It was not a little matter to be able to stand upon the defensive, after so severe a check: "I know very well, said Peter, that the Swedes will have the advantage of us for some time, but they will teach us at length to conquer them."

1701.] Having provided for the present emergency, and ordered recruits to be raised on every side, he sent to Moscow to cast new cannon,

* This chapter and the following, are taken entirely from the journal of Peter the Great, sent me from Petersbourg.

his own having been all taken before Narva. There being a scarcity of metal, he took all the bells of the churches, and of the religious houses in Moscow. This action did not favour much of superstition, but at the same time it was no mark of impiety. With those bells he made one hundred large cannon, 143 field pieces, from three to six-pounders, besides mortars and hautbitzers, which were all sent to Pleskow. In other countries the sovereign orders, and others execute; but here the czar was obliged to see every thing done himself. While he was hastening these preparations, he entered into a negotiation with the king of Denmark, who engaged to furnish him with three regiments of foot, and three of cavalry; an engagement which that monarch could not fulfil.

As soon as this treaty was signed, he hurried to the theatre of war. He had an interview with king Augustus at Birzen, on the frontiers of Courland and Lithuania. Feb. 27. His object was, to confirm that prince in his resolution of maintaining the war against Charles XII. and at the same time to engage the Polish diet to enter into the quarrel. It is well known, that a king of Poland is no more than the head person in a republic. The czar had the advantage of being always obeyed; but the king of Poland, and England, at present the king of Sweden, are all obliged to treat with their subjects*. Patkul and a few Poles in the interest of their monarch assisted

* We must beg leave to remark in this place, that a king of England has the power of doing good in virtue of his own authority, and may do evil if so disposed, by having a majority in a corrupt parliament; whereas, a king of Poland can neither do good nor evil, not having it in his power to dispose even of a pair of colours.

at these conferences. Peter promised to aid them with subsidies, and an army of 25,000 men. Livonia was to be restored to Poland, in case the diet would concur with their king, and assist in recovering this province: the diet hearkened more to their fears, than to the czar's proposals. The Poles were apprehensive of having their liberties restrained by the Saxons, and Russians, and were still more afraid of Charles XII. It was therefore agreed by the majority, not to serve their king, and not to fight.

The partisans of Augustus grew enraged against the contrary faction, and a civil war was lighted up in the kingdom; because their monarch had an intention to restore to it a considerable province.

Feb.] Peter then had only an impotent ally in king Augustus, and feeble succours in the Saxon troops; and the terror which Charles XII. inspired on every side, reduced Peter to the necessity of depending entirely upon his own strength.

March 1.] After travelling with the greatest expedition from Moscow to Courland, to confer with Augustus; he posted back from Courland to Moscow, to forward the accomplishment of his promises. He actually dispatched prince Repnin, with 4000 men, to Riga, on the banks of the Duna, where the Saxon troops were entrenched.

July.] The general consternation was now encreased; for Charles passing the Duna in spite of all the Saxons, who were advantageously posted on the opposite side, gained a complete victory over them; and then, without waiting a moment, he made himself master of Courland, advanced into Lithuania, and by his presence
en-

encouraged the Polish faction that opposed Augustus.

Peter, notwithstanding all this, still pursued his designs. General Patkul, who had been the soul of the conference at Birzen, and who had engaged in his service, procured him some German officers, disciplined his troops, and supplied the place of general le Fort. The czar ordered relays of horses to be provided for all the officers, and even for the German, Livonian, and Polish soldiers, who came to serve in his armies. He likewise inspected in person into every particular relating to their arms, their cloathing, and subsistence.

On the confines of Livonia and Esthonia, and to the eastward of the province of Novogorod, lies the great lake Peipus, which receives the waters of the river Velika, from out of the middle of Livonia, and gives rise in its northern part to the river Naiova, that washes the walls of the town of Narva, near which the Swedes gained their famous victory. This lake is upwards of thirty leagues in length, and from twelve to fifteen in breadth. It was necessary to keep a fleet there, to prevent the Swedish ships from insulting the province of Novogorod; to be ready to make a descent upon their coasts, and above all, to be a nursery for seamen. Peter employed the greatest part of the year 1701, in building on this lake, an hundred half gallies, to carry about fifty men each; and other armed barks were fitted out on the lake Ladoga. He directed all these operations in person, and set his new sailors to work: those who had been employed in 1697, at the Palus Meotis were then stationed near the Baltic. He frequently quitted those occupations to go to Moscow, and

the rest of the provinces; in order to enforce the observance of the late customs he had introduced, or to establish new ones.

Those princes who have employed the leisure moments of peace, in raising public works, have acquired to themselves a name: but that Peter, just after his misfortune at Narva, should apply to the junction of the Baltick, Caspian, and the European seas by canals, has crowned him with more real glory, than the most signal victory. It was in the year 1702, that he began to dig that deep canal, intended to join the Tanais and the Wolga. Other communications were likewise to be made, by means of lakes between the Tanais and the Duna; whose waters empty themselves into the Baltic, in the neighbourhood of Riga. But this latter project seemed to be still at a great distance, as Peter was far from having Riga in his possession.

While Charles was laying all Poland waste, Peter caused to be brought from that kingdom, and from Saxony, a number of shepherds with their flocks, in order to have wool fit for making good cloth; he likewise erected manufactures of linen and paper: gave orders for collecting a number of artificers; such as smiths, braziers, armourers, and founders, and the mines of Siberia were ransacked for ore. Thus was he continually labouring for the embellishment and defence of his dominions.

Charles pursued the course of his victories, and left a sufficient body of troops (as he imagined) on the frontiers of the czar's dominions, to secure all the possessions of Sweden. He had already formed a design to dethrone Augustus, and afterwards to pursue the czar with his victorious army to the very gates of Moscow.

There

There happened several slight engagements, in the course of this year, between the Russians and Swedes, in which the latter did not always prove superior; and even in those where they had the advantage, the Russians improved in the art of war. In short, in little more than twelve months, after the battle of Narva, the czar's troops were so well disciplined, that they defeated one of the best generals belonging to the king of Sweden.

Peter was then at Pleskow, from whence he detached numerous bodies of troops on all sides, to attack the Swedes; who were now defeated by a native of Russia, and not a foreigner. His general Sheremetow, by a skilful manœuvre, beat up the quarters of the Jan. 11. Swedish general Slippembac, in fe- 1702. veral places near Derpt, on the frontiers of Livonia: and at last obtained a victory over that officer himself. And now, for the first time, the Russians took from the Swedes four of their colours; which was thought a considerable number.

The lakes Peipus and Ladoga were for some time afterwards the theatres of sea-fights, between the Russians and Swedes; in which the latter had the same advantages as by land: namely, that of discipline and long practice; but the Russians had some few successes with their half gallies, at the lake Peipus, and the field marshal Sheremetow took a Swedish frig- May. gate.

By means of this lake the czar kept Livonia and Esthonia in continual alarms; his gallies frequently landed several regiments in those provinces; who re-imbarked whenever they failed of

of success, or else pursued their advantage : the Swedes were twice beaten in June. the neighbourhood of Derpt, while they July. were victorious every where else.

In all these actions the Russians were always superior in number : for this reason, Charles XII. who was so successful in every other place, gave himself little concern about these trifling advantages gained by the czar : but he should have considered, that these numerous forces of his rival were every day growing more accustomed to the business of fighting, and might soon become formidable to himself.

While both parties were thus engaged by sea and land in Livonia, Ingria, and Esthonia, the czar is informed, that a Swedish fleet had set sail in order to destroy Archangel ; upon which he immediately marched thither, and every one was astonished to hear of him on the coasts of the Frozen Sea, when he was thought to be at Moscow. He put the town into a posture of defence, prevented the intended descent, drew the plan of a citadel, called the New Dwina, laid the first stone, and then returned to Moscow, and from thence to the seat of war.

Charles made some alliances in Poland ; but the Russians, on their side, made a progress in Ingria and Livonia. Marshal Sheremetow marched to meet the Swedish army under the command of Slippembac, gave that general battle near the little river Embac, and defeated him, taking sixteen colours, and twenty pieces of cannon. Norberg places this action on the 1st December 1701, but the journal of Peter the Great fixes it on the 19th of July 1702.

6th August.] After this advantage, the Russian general marched onwards, laid the whole country under contribution, and takes the little town of Mariembourg on the confines of Ingria and Livonia. There are several towns of this name in the north of Europe; but this, though it no longer exists, is more celebrated in history than all the others, by the adventure of the empress Catharine.

This little town, having surrendered at discretion, the Swedes, who defended it, either thro' mistake or design, set fire to the magazine. The Russians, incensed that is, destroyed the town, and carried away all the inhabitants. Among the prisoners was a young woman, a native of Livonia, who had been brought up in the house of a Lutheran minister of that place, named Gluck, and who afterwards became the sovereign of those who had taken her captive, and who governed Russia by the name of the empress Catharine.

There had been many instances before this of private women being raised to the throne; nothing was more common in Russia, and in all Asiatic kingdoms, than for crowned heads to marry their own subjects; but that a poor stranger, who had been taken prisoner in the storming of a town, should become the absolute sovereign of that very empire, whither she was led captive, is an instance which fortune and merit never produced before nor since in the annals of the world.

The Russian arms proved equally successful in Ingria; for their half galleys on the lake Ladoga compelled the Swedish fleet to retire to Wi-

Wibourg *, a town at the other extremity of this great lake, from whence they could see the siege of the fortress of Notebourg, which was then carrying on by general Sheremetow. This was an undertaking of much greater importance than was imagined at that time, as it might open a communication with the Baltic Sea, the constant aim of Peter the Great.

Notebourg was a strong fortified town, built on an island in the Lake Ladoga; which it entirely commands, and by that means, whoever is in possession of it, must be masters of that part of the river Neva, which falls into the sea not far from thence. The Russians bombarded the town night and day, from the 18th of September to the 12th of October; and at length gave a general assault by three breaches. The Swedish garrison was reduced to an hundred men only, capable of defending the place; and what is very astonishing, they did defend it, and obtained, even in the breach, an honourable capitulation: moreover, Colonel Slippembac, who commanded there, would not surrender the town, but on condition of being permitted to send for two Swedish officers from the nearest post, to examine the breaches, in or Oct. 16. der to be witnesses for him to the king his master, that eighty-three men, who were all then left of the garrison capable of bearing arms, besides 156 sick and wounded, did not surrender to a whole army, till it was impossible for them to fight longer, or to

* This seems a mistake; our author probably meant to say Kercholme, because Wibourg is not on the lake Ladoga, but on the gulph of Finland.

preserve the place. This circumstance alone shews, what sort of an enemy the czar had to contend with, and the necessity there was of all his great efforts and military discipline. He distributed gold medals among his officers on this occasion, and gave rewards to all the private men; except a few, whom he punished for running away during the assault. Their comrades spit in their faces, and afterwards shot them to death, thus adding ignominy to punishment.

Notebourg was repaired, and its name changed to that of Schlusselfbourg, or the city of the Key, that place being the key of Ingria and Finland. The first governor was that Menzikoff whom we have already mentioned, and who was become an excellent officer, and had merited this honour by his gallant behaviour during the siege. His example served as an encouragement to all who have merit, without being distinguished by birth.

After this campaign of 1702, the czar resolved that Sheremetow, and the officers who had signalized themselves, should make a triumphal entry into Moscow. All the prisoners taken in this campaign marched Dec. 17. in the train of the victors, who had the Swedish colours and standards carried before them, together with the flag of the Swedish frigate taken on the lake Peipus. Peter assisted in the preparations for this triumphal pomp, as he had shared in the great actions it celebrated.

These shews naturally inspired emulation, otherwise they would have been no more than idle ostentation, Charles despised every thing of this kind, and, after the battle of Narva, held his enemies

History of the
enemies, their efforts, and their triumphs, in
equal contempt.

C H A P. XIII.

Reformation at MOSCOW.

Further successes. Founding of Petersburg. The
czar takes Narva, &c.

The year **T**HE short stay which the czar made
1703. at Moscow, in the beginning of
the winter 1703, was employed in seeing all his
new regulations put into execution, and in im-
proving the civil as well as military government.
Even his very amusements were calculated to
inspire his subjects with a taste for the new
manner of living he had introduced amongst
them. In this view he invited all the boyards
and principal ladies of Moscow, to the marriage
of one of his sisters, at which every one was
required to appear dressed after the ancient fa-
shion. A dinner was served up just in the same
manner as those in the 16th century *. By an
old superstitious custom, no one was to light a
fire on the wedding-day, even in the coldest sea-
son. This custom was rigorously observed upon
this occasion. The Russians formerly never
drank wine, but only mead and brandy; no
other liquors were permitted on this day, and,
when the guests made complaints, he replied,
in a joking manner, " This was a custom with
" your ancestors, and old customs are always

* Taken from the journal of Peter the Great.

“the best.” This raillery contributed greatly to the reformation of those who preferred past times to the present, at least it put a stop to their murmurings ; and there are several nations that stand in need of the like example.

A still more useful establishment than any of the rest, was that of a printing press for Russian and Latin types, the implements of which were all brought from Holland. They began by printing translations in the Russian language of several books of morality and polite literature. Ferguson founded schools for geometry, astronomy, and navigation,

Another foundation no less necessary, was that of a large hospital ; not one of those houses which encouraged idleness, and perpetuate the misery of the people, but such as the czar had seen at Amsterdam, where old persons and children are employed at work, and where every one within the walls are made useful in some way or other.

He established several manufactures ; and as soon as he had put in motion all those arts to which he gave birth in Moscow, he hastened to Woronitz, to give directions for building two ships of 80 guns, each with long cradles or carrens fitted to the ribs of the vessel, to buoy her up, and carry her safely over the shoals and banks of sand that lay about Asoph ; an ingenious contrivance, similar to that used by the Dutch in Holland, to get their large ships over the Pampus.

Having made all the necessary preparations against the Turks, he turned his attention in the next place against the Swedes. He went to visit the

the ships that were building at Olonitz, a town between the lakes Ladago and Onega, where he had established a foundery for making all kinds of arms; and when every thing bore a military aspect, at Moscow flourished all the arts of peace. A spring of mineral waters, which has been lately discovered near Olonitz, has added to the reputation of that place. From thence he proceeded to Schlusselfbourg, which he fortified.

We have already observed, that Peter was determined to pass regularly through all the military degrees: he had served as lieutenant of bombardiers under prince Menzikoff, before that favourite was made governor of Schlusselfbourg, and now he took the rank of captain, and served under marshal Sheremetow.

There was an important fortress near the lake Ladoga, and not far from the river Neva, named Nyantz or Nya *. It was necessary to make himself master of this place, in order to secure his conquests, and favour his other designs. He therefore undertook to transport a number of small barks, filled with soldiers, and to drive off the Swedish vessels that were bringing supplies, while Sheremetow had the care of the trenches. The citadel surrendered, and two Swedish vessels arrived too late to assist the besieged, being both attacked and taken by the czar. His journal says, that, as a reward for his service, "The captain of bombardiers was created knight of the order of St. Andrew by admiral Golowin, the first knight of that order."

* Some writers call it Nyenschantz.

After the taking of the fort of Nya, he resolved upon building the city of Petersburg, at the mouth of the Neva, upon the gulph of Finland.

The affairs of king Augustus were in a desperate way; the excessive victories of the Swedes in Poland had emboldened his enemies in the opposition, and even his friends had obliged him to dismiss a body of 20,000 Russians that the czar had sent him to reinforce his army. They thought by this sacrifice to deprive the malcontents of all pretext for joining the king of Sweden: but enemies are disarmed by force, a shew of weakness serving only to make them more insolent. These 20,000 men that had been disciplined by Patkul proved of infinite service in Livonia and Ingria, while Augustus was losing his dominions. This reinforcement, and above all the possession of Nya, enabled the czar to found his new capital.

It was in this barren and marshy spot of ground, which has communication with the main land only by one way, that Peter laid the foundation of Petersburg, in the 60th degree of latitude, and the 44th and an half of longitude. The ruins of some of the bastions of Nya, was made use of for the first stones of the foundation †. They began by building a small fort upon one of the islands, which is now in the center of the city. The Swedes beheld, without apprehension, a settlement in the midst of a morass, and inaccessible to vessels of burden; but in a very short time they saw the fortifications advanced, a town raised, and the little island of Cronstadt,

† Petersburg was founded on Whitsunday, the 27th of May, 1703.

situated over against it, changed in 1704 into an impregnable fortress, under the cannon of which even the largest fleets may ride in safety.

These works, which seemed to require a time of profound peace, were carried on in the very bosom of war, workmen of every sort were called together from Moscow, Astracan, Casan, and the Ukraine, to assist in building the new city. Neither the difficulties of the ground, that was to be rendered firm and raised, the distance of the necessary materials, the unforeseen obstacles which are for ever starting up in all great undertakings; nor, lastly, the epidemical disorder which carried off a prodigious number of the workmen, could discourage the Royal Founder; and, in the space of five months, a new city arose from the ground. It is true, indeed, it was little better than a cluster of huts, with only two brick houses surrounded by ramparts; but this was all that was then necessary. Time and perseverance accomplished the rest. In less than five months after the founding of Petersburg, a Dutch ship came to trade there, Nov. the captain of which was handsomely rewarded, and the Dutch soon found the way to Petersburg.

While Peter was directing the establishment of this colony, he took care to provide every day for its safety, by making himself master of the neighbouring posts. A Swedish colonel, named Croniort, had taken post on the river Sestra, and thence threatened the rising city.

Peter, without delay, marched against July 8. him with his two regiments of guards, defeated him, and obliged him to repass the river. Having thus put his town in safety,

safety, he repaired to Olonitz, to give directions for building a number of small vessels, and afterwards returned to Petersburg, on board a frigate that had been built by his direction, taking with him six transport vessels for present use, till the others could be got ready. Even at this juncture he did not forget his ally the king of Poland, but sent him a reinforcement of 12,000 foot, and a subsidy in money of 300,000 rubles, which make about 1,500,000 French livres *. It has been remarked, that his annual revenue did not exceed then 5,000,000 rubles; a sum, which the expence of his fleets, of his armies, and of his new establishments, seemed more than sufficient to exhaust. He had, almost at one and the same time, fortified Novogorod, Pleskow, Kiow, Smolensko, Asoph, Archangel, and founded a capital. Notwithstanding all which, he had still a sufficiency left to assist his ally, with men and money. Cornelius le Bruine, a Dutchman, who was on his travels, and at that time in Russia, and with whom he frequently conversed very freely, as indeed he did with all strangers, says, that the czar himself assured him, that he had still 300,000 rubles remaining in his coffers, after all the expences of the war were defrayed.

In order to put his infant city of Petersburg out of danger of insult, he went in person to sound the depth of water thereabouts, fixed upon a place for building the fort of Cronstadt; and, after making the model of it in wood with his own hands, he employed prince Menzikoff to

* About 60,000 l. sterling.

put it in execution. From thence he went to pass the winter at Moscow, in order
 Nov. 5. to establish, by degrees, the several alterations he had made in the laws, manners, and customs of Russia. He regulated the finances, and put them upon a new footing. He expedited the works that were carrying on in the Woronitz, at Asoph, and in an harbour which he had caused to be made on the Palus Mæotis, under the fort of Taganrock.

Jan. 1704.] The Ottoman Porte, alarmed at these preparations, sent an embassy to the czar, complaining thereof: to which he returned for answer, that he was master in his own dominions, as well as the Grand Seignior was in Turkey, and that it was no infringement of the peace, to render the Russian power respectable on the Euxine sea.

March 30.] Upon his return to Petersburg, finding his new citadel of Cronstadt, which had been founded in the bosom of the sea, completely finished, he furnished it with the necessary artillery. But in order to settle himself firmly in Ingria, and entirely to repair the disgrace he had suffered before Narva, he esteemed it necessary to take that city. While he was making preparations for the siege, a small fleet appeared on the lake of Peipus, to oppose his designs. The Russian half galleys went out to meet them, gave them battle, and took the whole squadron, which had on board 98 pieces of cannon. After this victory, the czar lays
 April. siege to Narva both by sea and land, and, which was most extraordinary, he lays siege to the city of Derpt in Esthonia at the same time.

Who

Who would have imagined, that there was an university in Derpt? Gustavus Adolphus had founded one there, but it did not render that city more famous, Drept being only known by these two sieges. Peter was incessantly going from the one to the other, forwarding the attacks, and directing all the operations. The Swedish general Slippembac was in the neighbourhood of Derpt, with a body of 2500 men.

The besiegers expected every instant, when he would throw succours into the place; but Peter, on this occasion, had recourse to a stratagem, worthy of more frequent imitation. He ordered two regiments of foot, and one of horse, to be cloathed in the same uniform, and to carry the same standards and colours as the Swedes. These sham Swedes attack the trenches, and the Russi-

ans pretend to be put to flight, the gar-
 June 27. rison, deceived by appearances, make a sally; upon which the mock combatants join their forces, and fall upon the Swedes, one half of whom were left dead upon the place, and the rest made shift to get back to the town. Slippembac arrives soon after with succours to relieve it, but is totally defeated. At length
 July 23. Derpt was obliged to capitulate, just as the czar was preparing every thing for a general assault.

At the same time, Peter met with a considerable check on the side of his new city of Peterf-
 bur; but this did not prevent him either from going on with the works of that place, or from vigorously prosecuting the siege of Narva. It has already been observed, that he sent a reinforcement of troops and money to king Augustus, when his enemies were driving him from

his throne; but both these aids proved useless.

The Russians having joined the Lithuanians in the interest of Augustus, July 31. were totally defeated in Courland by the Swedish general Lewenhaupt: and had the victors directed their efforts towards Livonia, Esthonia, and Ingria, they might have destroyed the czar's new works, and baffled all the fruits of his great undertakings. Peter was every day tapping the breast-work of Sweden, while Charles seemed to neglect all resistance, for the pursuit of less advantageous, tho' a more brilliant fame.

On the 12th July 1704, only a single Swedish colonel, at the head of his detachment obliged the Polish nobility to nominate a new king, on the field of election, called Kolo, near the city of Warsaw. The cardinal, primate of the kingdom, and several bishops, submitted to a Lutheran prince, notwithstanding the menaces and excommunications of the supreme pontiff. In short, every thing gave way to force. All the world knows in what manner Stanislaus Leczinsky was elected king, and how Charles XII. obliged the greatest part of Poland to acknowledge him.

Peter, however, would not abandon the dethroned king, but redoubled his assistance, in proportion to the necessities of his ally; and while his enemy was making kings, he beat the Swedish generals one after another in Esthonia and Ingria, from thence he passed to the siege of Narva, and gave several vigorous assaults to the town. There were three bastions, famous at least for their names, called Victory, Honour, and Glory. The czar carried them all
three

three sword-in-hand. The besiegers forced their way into the town, where they pillaged and exercised all those cruelties which were but too customary at that time, between the Swedes and Russians.

Aug. 20.] Peter, on this occasion, gave an example, that ought to have gained him the affections of all his new subjects. He ran every where in person, to put a stop to the pillage and slaughter, rescues several women out of the clutches of the brutal soldiery, and, after having, with his own hand, killed two of those ruffians, who had refused to obey his orders, he enters the town-house, whither the citizens had ran in crowds for shelter, and laying his sword, yet reeking with blood, upon the table, "This sword, said he, is not stained with the blood of your fellow-citizens, but with that of my own soldiers, which I have spilt to save your lives."

C H A P. XIV.

PETER the GREAT keeps possession of all Ingria, while Charles XII. is triumphant in other places. Rise of Menzikoff. Petersburg secured. The czar executes his designs notwithstanding the victories of the king of Sweden*.

The year **PETER** being now master of all 1704. Ingria, conferred the government of that province upon Menzikoff; and at the same time gave him the title of prince, and the rank of major general. Pride and prejudice might, in other countries, find means to gainsay, that a pastry-cook's boy should be raised to be a general and governor, and to princely dignity; but Peter had already accustomed his subjects to see, without surprise, every thing given to merit, and nothing to mere nobility. Menzikoff, by a lucky accident, had, while a boy, been taken from his original obscurity, and placed in the czar's family †, where he learned several lan-

* All the foregoing chapters, and likewise those which follow, are taken from the journals of Peter the Great, and the papers sent me from Petersburg, carefully compared with other memoirs.

† Menzikoff's parents were vassals of the monastery of Cosmopoly: at the age of thirteen, he went to Moscow, and was taken into the service of a pastry-cook. His employment was singing ballads, and crying puffs and cakes about the streets. One day, as he was following this occupation, the czar happening to hear him, and to be diverted with one of his songs, sent for him, and asked him if he would sell his pies and his basket? The boy answered, that his business was to sell his pies,

languages, and acquired a knowledge of public affairs, both in the cabinet and field; and having found means to ingratiate himself with his master, he afterwards knew how to render himself necessary. He greatly forwarded the works at Petersburg, of which he had the direction; several brick and stone-houses were already built, with an arsenal and magazines; the fortifications were completed, but the palaces were not built till some time afterwards.

Peter was scarcely settled in Narva, when he offered fresh succours to the dethroned king of Poland; he promised him a body of troops over and above the 12,000 men he had already sent him, and actually dispatched general Repnin, from the frontiers of Lithu- Aug. 19.
ania, with six thousand horse, and the same number of foot. All this while he did not lose sight of his colony of Petersburg. The buildings went on very fast: his navy encreased daily; several ships and frigates were on the stocks at Olmutz; these he took care to see finished, and brought them Oct. 11.
himself into the harbour of Petersburg.

pies, but he must ask his master's leave to sell his basket; yet, as every thing belonged to his prince, his majesty had only to lay his commands upon him. The czar was so pleased with this answer, that he immediately ordered him to court, where he gave him at first a mean employment; but being every day more pleased with his wit, he thought fit to place him about his person, and to make him groom of his bed-chamber, from whence he gradually raised him to the highest preferments. He was tall and well shaped. At his first coming into the czar's service, he enlisted in le Fort's company, and acquired, under that general's instruction, such a degree of knowledge and skill, as enabled him to command armies, and to become one of the bravest and most successful generals in Russia.

Each time he returned to Moscow, was distinguished by triumphal entries. In Dec. 30. this manner did he revisit it this year, from whence he made only one excursion, to be present at the launching of his first ship of 80 guns upon the Woronitz, of which ship he himself had drawn the dimensions the preceding year.

May, 1705.] As soon as the campaign could be opened in Poland, he hastened to the army, which he had sent to the assistance of Augustus, on the frontiers of that kingdom; but while he was thus supporting his ally, a Swedish fleet put to sea to destroy Petersburg, and the fortress of Cronstot, as yet hardly finished. This fleet consisted of 22 ships of war, from 54 to 64 guns each besides six frigates, two bomb-ketches, and two fireships. The troops that were sent on this expedition, made a descent on the little island of Kotin; but a Russian colonel, named Tolbogwin, who commanded a regiment there, ordered his soldiers to lie down flat on their bellies, while the Swedes June 27. were coming on shore, and then suddenly rising up, they threw in so brisk and well directed a fire, that the Swedes were put into confusion, and forced to retreat with the utmost precipitation to their ships, leaving behind them all their dead, and upwards of three hundred prisoners.

However, their fleet still continued hovering about the coast, and threatened Petersburg. They made another descent, and were repulsed as before; a body of land-forces were also advancing

vancing from Wiburn *, under the command of the Swedish general Meidel, and took their route by Schlusfelbourg : this was the most considerable attempt that Charles had yet made upon those territories. which Peter had either conquered or new formed. The Swedes June 25. were every where repulsed, and Peterfburg remained in security.

Peter, on the other hand, advanced towards Courland, with a design to penetrate as far as Riga. His plan was to make himself master of Livonia, while Charles XII. was busied in reducing the Poles entirely under the obedience of the new king he had given them. The czar was still at Wilnaw in Lithuania. and his general Shermetow was approaching towards Mittau, the capital of Courland ; but there he was met by general Lewenhaupt, already famous by several victories, and a pitched battle was fought between the two armies at a place called Gemavershoff, or Gemavers.

In all those actions, where experience and discipline decide the day, the Swedes, tho' inferior in number, had the advantage. The Russians were totally defeated, and June 28. lost all their artillery. Peter, notwithstanding the loss of three battles, viz. at Gemavers, at Jacobstadt, and at Narva, always retrieved his losses, and even converted them to his advantage.

* Mr. de Voltaire calls this city Wiburg, in this and some other places of his history. The French are not always very attentive to the right names of places, but here it is of some consequence. Wiburg is the capital of Jutland in Denmark. Wiburn, the city here meant, is the capital of Carelia in Russian Finland.

After the battle of Gemavers, he marched his army into Courland; came before Mittau, made himself master of the town, and afterwards laid siege to the citadel, which he took by capitulation.

Sept. 14, 1705.] The Russian troops at that time had the character of distinguishing their successes, by rapine and pillage; a custom of too great antiquity in all nations. But Peter, at the taking of Narva, had made such alterations in this custom, that the Russian soldiers appointed to guard the vaults, where the grand dukes of Courland were buried, in the castle of Mittau, perceiving that the bodies had been taken out of their tombs, and stript of their ornaments, refused to take possession of their post, till a Swedish colonel had been first sent for, to inspect the condition of the place; who gave them a certificate that this outrage had been committed by the Swedes themselves.

A rumour which was spread throughout the whole empire, that the czar had been totally defeated at the battle of Gemavers, proved of greater prejudice to his affairs, than even the loss of that battle. The remainder of the ancient Strelitzes in garrison at Astracan, emboldened by this false report, mutinied, and murdered the governor of the town. Peter was obliged to send marshal Sheremetow, with a body of forces to quell the insurrection, and punish the mutineers.

Every thing seemed now to conspire against the czar; the success and valour of Charles XII. the misfortunes of Augustus; the forced neutrality of Denmark; the insurrection of the ancient Strelitzes; the murmurs of a people, sensible

sensible of the restraint, but not of the utility of the late reform; the discontent of the grandees, who found themselves subjected to military discipline; and lastly, the exhausted state of the finances, were sufficient to have discouraged any prince except Peter: but he did not despond, even for an instant. He soon quelled the revolt, and having provided for the safety of Ingria, and secured the possession of the citadel of Mitau, in spite of the victorious Lewenhaupt, who had not troops enough to oppose him; he found himself at liberty to march an army through Samojitia, and Lithuania.

He now shared with Charles XII. the glory of giving laws to Poland. He advanced as far as Tikoczin; where he had an interview for the second time with king Augustus; when he endeavoured to comfort him under his misfortunes, promising to revenge his cause, and at the same time made him a present of some colours, which Menzikoff had taken from the troops of his rival. The two monarchs afterwards went together to Grodno, the capital of Lithuania, where they staid till the 15th of December. At their parting, Peter presented him both men and money, and then, according to his usual custom, went to pass some part of the winter at Moscow, to encourage the arts and sciences. 30 Dec. there, and to enforce his new laws, after having made a very difficult and laborious campaign.

C H A P. XV.

While Peter is strengthening his conquests, and improving the police of his dominions, his enemy Charles XII. gains several battles: gives laws to Poland and Saxony, and to Augustus, notwithstanding a victory gained by the Russians. Augustus resigns the crown, and delivers up Patkul the czar's ambassador. Murder of Patkul, who is sentenced to be broke upon the wheel.

The year **PETER** was hardly returned to 1706. Moscow, when he heard that Charles XII. after being every where victorious, was advancing towards Grodno, to attack the Russian troops. King Augustus had been obliged to fly from Grodno, and retire with precipitation towards Saxony, with four regiments of Russian dragoons; a step which both weakened and discouraged the army of his protector. Peter found all the advances to Grodno occupied by the Swedes, and his troops dispersed.

While he was with the greatest difficulty assembling his troops in Lithuania, the famous Schulembourg, who was the last support Augustus had left, and who afterwards gained so much glory by the defence of Corfou against the Turks, was advancing on the side of Great Poland, with about twelve thousand Saxons, and six thousand Russians, taken from the body of troops with which the czar had entrusted that
unfor-

unfortunate prince. Schulembourg expected with just reason, that he should be able to prop the sinking fortunes of Augustus; he perceived that Charles XII. was employed in Lithuania, and that there were only a body of ten thousand Swedes under general Renschild to interrupt his march; he therefore advanced with confidence as far as the frontiers of Silesia; which is the passage out of Saxony into Upper Poland. When he came near the village of Fraustadt, on the frontiers of that kingdom, he met marshal Renschild, who was advancing to give him battle.

Whatever care I take to void repeating what has been already mentioned in the history of Charles XII. I am obliged in this place to take notice once more, that there was in the Saxon army a French regiment, that had been taken prisoners at the famous battle of Hochstedt (or Blenheim) and obliged to serve in the Saxon troops. My memoirs say, that this regiment had the charge of the artillery, and add, that the French, struck with the fame and reputation of Charles XII. and discontented with the Saxon service, laid down their arms as soon as Feb. they came in sight of the enemy, and desired to be taken into the Swedish army, in which they continued to the end of the war. This defection was as the beginning, or signal of a total overthrow to the Russian army, of which no more than three battalions were saved, and almost every man of these was wounded; and as no quarter was granted, the remainder was cut in pieces.

Norberg the chaplain pretends, that the Swedish word at this battle was, "In the name of God," and that of the Russians, "Kill all:" but

it was the Swedes who killed all in God's name. The czar himself declares in one of his manifestos*, that a number of Russians, Cossacks, and Calmucks, that had been made prisoners, were murdered in cool blood three days after that battle. The irregular troops on both sides had accustomed their generals to these cruelties, than which greater were never committed in the most barbarous times. I had the honour to hear king Stanislaus himself say, that in one of those engagements, which were so frequent in Poland, a Russian officer, who had formerly been one of his friends, came to put himself under his protection, after the defeat of the corps he commanded; and that the Swedish general Steinbok shot him dead with a pistol, while he held him in his arms.

This was the fourth battle the Russians had lost against the Swedes, without reckoning the other victories of Charles XII. in Poland. The czar's troops that were in Grodno, ran the risk of suffering a still greater disgrace, by being surrounded on all sides; but he fortunately found means to get them together, and even to strengthen them with new reinforcements. But necessitated at once to provide for the safety of this army and the security of his conquests in Ingra, he ordered prince Menzikoff to march with the army under his command eastward, and from thence southward as far as Kiow.

While his men were upon their march, he repairs to Schlusselfbourg, from thence to Aug. Narva, and to his colony of Petersburg. and puts those places in a posture of de-

* The czar's manifesto in the Ukraine 1705.

fence. From the Baltic he flies to the banks of the Boristhenes, to enter into Poland by the way of Kiow, making it still his chief care to render those victories of Charles, which he had not been able to prevent, of as little advantage to the victor as possible. At this very time he meditated a new conquest; namely, that of Wibourg, the capital of Carelia, situated on the gulph of Finland. He went in person to lay siege to this place, but for this Oct. time it withstood the power of his arms; succours arrived in season, and he was obliged to raise the siege. His rival Charles XII. did not in fact make any conquests, though he gained so many battles: he was at that time in pursuit of king Augustus in Saxony, being always more intent upon humbling that prince, and crushing him beneath the weight of his superior power and reputation, than upon recovering Ingria, that had been wrested from him by a vanquished enemy.

He spread terror through all Upper Poland, Silesia, and Saxony. King Augustus's whole family, his mother, his wife, his son, and the principal nobility of the country, were retired into the heart of the empire. Augustus now sued for peace, chusing rather to trust himself to the mercy of his conqueror, than in the arms of his protector. He entered into a treaty which deprived him of the crown of Poland, and covered him at the same time with ignominy. This was a private treaty, and was to be concealed from the czar's generals, with whom he had taken refuge in Poland, while Charles XII. was giving laws in Leipfick, and acting as absolute master throughout his electorate.

His

His plenipotentiaries had already signed the fatal treaty, by which he not only divested himself of the crown of Poland, but proposed never more to assume the title of king; at the same time he recognized Stanislaus, renounced his alliance with the czar his benefactor, and to complete his humiliation, engaged to deliver up to Charles XII. John Reinold Patkul, the czar's ambassador and general in the Russian service, who was then actually fighting his cause. He had sometime before ordered Patkul to be arrested upon false suspicions, contrary to the law of nations; and now, in direct violation of these laws, he delivered him up to his enemy. It had been better for him to have died sword-in-hand, than to have concluded such a treaty: a treaty, which not only robbed him of his crown, and of his reputation; but likewise endangered his liberty, because he was at that time in the power of prince Menzikoff in Posenania, and the few Saxons that he had with him were paid by the Russians.

Prince Menzikoff was opposed in that district by a Swedish army, reinforced with a strong party of Poles, in the interest of the new king Stanislaus, under the command of general Maderfeld; and not knowing that Augustus had engaged in a treaty with the enemies of Russia, had proposed to attack them, and Augustus did not dare to refuse. The battle was fought near Kalish, in the palatinate belonging to Oct. 19. Stanislaus; this was the first pitched battle the Russians had gained against the Swedes. Prince Menzikoff had all the glory of the actions, four thousand of the enemy were

were left dead on the field, and 2598 were made prisoners.

It is difficult to comprehend how Augustus could be prevailed on, after this battle, to ratify a treaty which deprived him of all the fruits of his victory. But Charles was still triumphant in Saxony, where his very name spread terror. The success of the Russians appeared so inconsiderable, and the Polish party against Augustus was so strong, and, in fine, that monarch was so ill-advised, that he signed that fatal convention. Neither did he stop here: he wrote to his envoy Finkstein a letter, that was if possible more shameful than the treaty itself; for therein he asked pardon for having obtained a victory, "protesting, that
"the battle had been fought against his will;
"that the Russians and the Poles, his adherents,
"had obliged him to it; that he had with a
"view of preventing it, actually made some
"movements to abandon Menzikoff; that Ma-
"derfeld might have beaten him, had he
"made the most of that opportunity; that he
"was ready to restore all the Swedish prisoners,
"or to break with the Russians; and that, in
"fine, he would give the king of Sweden all
"possible satisfaction," for having dared to beat his troops.

This whole affair, unparalleled and inconceivable as it is, is nevertheless strictly true. When we reflect, that, with all this weakness, Augustus was one of the bravest princes in Europe; we may plainly perceive, that the loss or preservation, the rise or decline of empires, are entirely owing to fortitude of mind.

Two other circumstances concurred to complete the disgrace of the king of Poland elector of Saxony.

Saxony, and heighten the abuse which Charles XII. made of his good fortune; the first was his obliging Augustus to write a letter of congratulation to the new king Stanislaus on his election: the second was terrible, he even compelled Augustus to deliver up Patkul, the czar's ambassador and general*. It is sufficiently known to all Europe, that this minister was afterwards broke alive upon the wheel at Casimir in the month of September 1707. Norberg the chaplain confesses that the orders for his execution were all written in Charles's own hand.

There is not a civilian in all Europe, nay even the vilest slave, but must feel the whole horror of this barbarous injustice. The first crime of this unfortunate man was, the having made an humble representation of the rights and privileges of his country, at the head of six Livonian gentlemen, who were sent as deputies from the whole province: having been condemned to die for fulfilling the first of duties, that of serving his country agreeable to her laws. This iniquitous sentence put him in full possession of a right, which all mankind derive from

* The impartiality of an historian obliges us in this place to advertise our readers, that it was not the fault of Augustus, that Patkul was delivered up to the king of Sweden; Augustus having privately sent orders to the commandant of the fort of Konigstein, where Patkul was then confined, to suffer his prisoner to make his escape in time. But the avarice of this officer proved fatal to the life of the unhappy captive, and to the character of his own prince, for while he was endeavouring to make the best bargain he could for himself, the time slipped inconceivably away; and while they were yet debating upon the price of the proposed release, the guards sent by Charles came and demanded Patkul in the name of their sovereign. The commandant was forced to obey, and the unhappy victim was delivered up, contrary to the intentions of Augustus.

nature, that of chusing his country. Being made afterwards ambaffador to one of the greateft monarchs in the univerfe, his perfon thereby became facred. On this occafion the law of force violated that of nature and nations. In former ages cruelties of this kind were hidden in the blaze of fuccefs, but now they fully the glory of a conqueror.

C H A P. XVI.

Attempts made to fet up a third king of Poland. Charles XII. fet out from Saxony with a powerful army, and marches through Poland in a victorious manner. Cruelties committed. Conduct of the czar. Successes of the king of Sweden, who at length advances towards Ruffia.

The year 1707. **C**HARLES XII. enjoyed the fruits of his good fortune in Altranftadt near Leipfick, whither the proteftant princes of the German empire repaired in droves to pay homage to him, and implore his protection. He received ambaffadors from almoft all the potentates of Europe. The emperor Jofeph implicitly followed his directions. Peter then perceiving that king Auguftus had renounced his protection and his own crown, and that a part of the Polish nation had acknowledged Staniflaus, liftened to the propofals made him by Yolkova of Jan. chusing a third king.

A diet was held at Lublin, in which feveral of the palatines were propofed; and among others, prince Ragotski was put upon the lift, that

that prince, who was so long kept in prison when young by the emperor Leopold, and who afterwards when he procured his liberty was his competitor for the throne of Hungary.

This negociation was pushed very far, and Poland was on the point of having three kings at one time. Prince Ragotski not succeeding, Peter thought to bestow the crown on Simiaufki, grand general of the republic: a person of great power and interest, and head of a third party, that would neither acknowledge the dethroned king, nor the person elected by the opposed party.

In the midst of these troubles, there was a talk of peace, as is customary on the like occasions. Besséval the French envoy in Saxony interposed, in order to bring about a reconciliation between the czar and the king of Sweden. It was thought at that time by the court of France, that Charles, having no longer either the Russians or Poles to fight against, might turn his arms against the emperor Joseph, with whom he was not on very good terms, and on whom he had even imposed several laws during his stay in Saxony. But Charles made answer, that he would treat with the czar in Moscow. It was on this occasion that Peter said, "My brother Charles wants to act the Alexander, but he shall not find a Darius in me."

The Russians however were still in Poland, and were in the city of Warsaw, while the king whom Charles XII. had set over the Poles was hardly acknowledged by that nation. In the mean time, Charles was enriching his army with the spoils of Saxony.

Aug.

Aug. 22.] At length he began his march from Altranstadt, at the head of an army of 45,000 men; a force which it seemed impossible for the czar to withstand, seeing he had been entirely defeated by 8,000 only at Narva.

Aug. 27.] It was in passing by the walls of Dresden, that Charles made that very extraordinary visit to king Augustus, which, as Norberg says, "will strike posterity with admiration." It was, running an unaccountable risk to put himself in the power of a prince whom he had deprived of his kingdom. From thence he continued his march through Silesia, and re-entered Poland.

This country had been entirely ravaged by war, ruined by factions, and was a prey to every kind of calamity. Charles continued advancing with his army through the province of Muscovia, and chose the most difficult ways he could take. The inhabitants, who had taken shelter in the morasses, resolved to make him at least pay for his passage. Six thousand peasants dispatched an old man of their body to speak to him: this man, who was of a very extraordinary figure, clad in white, and armed with two carabines, made a speech to Charles; but as the standers-by did not very well understand what he said, they, without any further ceremony, dispatched him in the midst of his harangue, and before their king's face. The peasants, in a rage, immediately withdrew, and took up arms. All who could be found were seized, and obliged to hang one another; the last was compelled to put the rope about his neck himself, and to be his own executioner. All their houses were burnt to the ground. This fact

fact is attested by Norberg, who was an eye-witness, and therefore cannot be contradicted, as it cannot be related without inspiring horror.

The year 1708, Feb. 6.] Charles being arrived within a few leagues of Grodno in Lithuania, is informed of the czar's being there in person with a body of troops; upon which, without staying to deliberate, he takes only 800 of his guards, and sets out for Grodno. A German officer, named Mulfels, who commanded a body of troops, posted at one of the gates of the town, making no doubt, when he saw Charles, but that he was followed by his whole army, instead of disputing the passage with him, leaves it open, and takes to flight. The alarm is now spread through the whole town; every one imagines the whole Swedish army already entered; the few Russians who made any resistance, are cut in pieces by the Swedish guards; and all the officers assure the czar, that the victorious army had made itself master of the place. Hereupon Peter retreats behind the ramparts, and Charles plants a guard of thirty men, at the very gate through which the czar had just before entered.

In this confusion, some of the jesuits, whose college had been taken to accommodate the king of Sweden, as being the handsomest structure in the place, went by night to the czar, and for this time told the whole truth. Upon this, Peter immediately returns into the town, and forces the Swedish guards. An engagement ensues in the streets and public places; but, at length, the whole Swedish army appearing in sight, the czar is obliged to yield to superior numbers, and leaves the town in the hands

hands of the victor, who made all Poland tremble.

Charles had augmented his forces in Livonia and Finland, and Peter had every thing to fear, not only for his conquests on this side, together with those in Lithuania, but also for his ancient territories, and even for the city of Moscow itself. He was obliged then to provide at once for the safety of all these different places, at such a distance from each other. Charles could not make any rapid conquests to the eastward of Lithuania in the depth of winter, and in a marshy country, subject to epidemical disorders, which had been spread by poverty and famine from Warsaw as far as Minski. Peter posted his troops so as to command the passes of the river, guarded all the important posts, and did every thing in his power to impede the marches of April 8. his enemy, and afterwards hastened to put things in a proper situation at Petersburg.

Though Charles was lording it in Poland, he took nothing from the czar; but Peter, by the use he made of his new fleet, by landing his troops in Finland, by the taking and dismantling the town of Borgau, and by seizing a May 22. great booty, was procuring many real and great advantages to himself, and distressing his enemy.

Charles, after being detained a long time in Lithuania by continual rains, at length reached the little river of Berezine, some few leagues from the Boristhenes. Nothing could withstand his activity; he threw a bridge over the river in sight of the Russians; beat a detachment that guarded the passage, and got to Holozin on the river

river Bibitsch, where the czar had posted a considerable body of troops to check the impetuous progress of his rival. The little river Bibitsch is only a small brook in dry weather; but at this time it was swelled by the rains to a deep and rapid stream. On the other side was a morass, behind which the Russians had thrown up an intrenchment for above a quarter of a league, defended by a large and deep ditch, and covered by a parapet, lined with artillery. Nine regiments of horse, and eleven of foot, were advantageously posted in these lines, so that the passage of the river seemed impracticable.

The Swedes, according to the custom of war, got ready their pontoons, and erected batteries to favour their passage; but Charles, whose impatience to engage would not let him brook the least delay, did not wait till the pontoons were ready. Marshal Schwerin, who served a long time under him, has assured me several times, that one day that they were to come to action, observing his generals to be very busy in concerting the necessary dispositions, said tartly to them, "When will you have done with this trifling?" and immediately advanced in person at the head of his guards, which he did particularly on this memorable day.

He flung himself into the river, followed by his regiment of guards. Their numbers broke the impetuosity of the current, but the water was as high as their shoulders, and they could make no use of their firelocks. Had the artillery of the parapet been but tolerably well served, or had the infantry but levelled their pieces in a proper manner, not a single Swede would have escaped.

July

July 25.] The king, after wading the river, passed the morafs on foot. As foon as the army had furmounted these obstacles within fight of the Ruffians, they drew up in order of battle, and attacked the enemies entrenchments seven different times, and it was not till the seventh attack that the Ruffians gave way. By the accounts of their own historians, the Swedes took but 12 field-pieces, and 24 mortars.

It was therefore evident, that the czar had at length succeeded in disciplining his troops, and this victory of Holozin, while it covered Charles XII. with glory, might have made him sensible of the many dangers he must have to encounter in adventuring into such distant countries, where his army could march only in small bodies, thro' woods, morasses, and where he would be obliged to fight out every step of his way; but the Swedes, being accustomed to carry all before them, dreaded neither danger nor fatigue*.

* What would the Swedes say, were they living, to see the pitiful figure their descendants have made in this war?

C H A P. XVII.

CHARLES XII. crosses the Boristhenes, penetrates into the Ukraine, but concert[s] his measures badly. One of his armies is defeated by PETER the GREAT: he loses his supply of provisions and ammunition: advances forward through a desert country: his adventures on the Ukraine.

The year 1708. **A**T last Charles arrived on the borders of the Boristhenes, at a small town called Mohilow. This was the important spot where he was to be determined, whether he should direct his march eastward towards Moscow, or southwards towards the Ukraine. His own army, his friends, his enemies, all expected that he would direct his course immediately for the capital of Russia. Which ever way he took, Peter was following him from Smolensko with a strong army; no one expected that he would turn towards the Ukraine. He was induced to take this strange resolution by Mazeppa, hetman of the Cossacks, who being an old man of seventy, and without children, ought to have thought only of ending his days in peace: gratitude should have bound him to the czar, to whom he was indebted for his present dignity; but whether he had any real cause of complaint against that prince, or that he was dazzled with the lustre of Charles's exploits, or whether, in time he thought to make himself independent, he betrayed his benefactor, and privately espoused the interests of the king

king of Sweden, flattering himself with the hopes of engaging his whole nation in rebellion with himself.

Charles made not the least doubt of subduing the Russian empire, as soon as his troops should be joined by so warlike a people as the Cossacks. Mazeppa was to furnish him with what provisions, ammunition, and artillery he should want; besides these powerful succours, he was to be joined by an army of 16 or 17,000 men out of Livonia, under the command of general Lewenhaupt, who was to bring with him a prodigious quantity of warlike stores and provisions. Charles was not at the trouble of reflecting, whether the czar was within reach of attacking this army, and depriving him of these necessary supplies. He never informed himself whether Mazeppa was in a condition to observe his promises; if that Cossack had credit enough to change the disposition of a whole nation, who are generally guided only by their own opinion; or whether his army was provided with sufficient resources in case of an accident; but imagined, if Mazeppa should prove deficient in abilities or fidelity, he could trust to his own valour and good fortune. The Swedish army then advanced beyond the Boristhenes towards the Desna: it was between these two rivers, that he expected to meet with Mazeppa. His march was attended with many difficulties and dangers, on account of the badness of the road, and the many parties of Russians that were hovering about those regions.

Sept. 11.] Menzikoff, at the head of some horse and foot, attacked the king's advanced guard, threw them into disorder, and killed a

K

number

number of his men. He lost a greater number of his own, indeed, but that did not discourage him. Charles immediately hastened to the field of battle, and with some difficulty repulsed the Russians, at the hazard of his own life, by engaging a party of dragoons, by whom he was surrounded. All this while Mazeppa did not appear, and provisions began to grow scarce. The Swedish soldiers, seeing their king share in all their dangers, fatigues, and wants, were not dispirited; but though they admired his courage, they could not refrain from murmuring at his conduct.

The orders which the king had sent to Lewenhaupt to march forward with all haste, to join him with the necessary supplies, were not delivered by twelve days so soon as they should have been. This was a long delay, as circumstances then stood. However, Lewenhaupt at length began his march. Peter suffered him to pass the Boristhenes; but as soon as his army was got between that river and the lesser ones, which empty themselves into it, he crossed over after him, and attacked him with his united forces, which had followed in different corps at equal distances from one another. This battle was fought between the Boristhenes and the Soffa*.

Prince Menzikoff was upon his return with the same body of horse, with which he had lately engaged Charles XII. General Baur followed him, and the czar himself headed the flower of his army. The Swedes imagined they had to deal with an army of 40,000 men, and the same

* In the Russian language Soeza.

was believed for a long time on the faith of their relation : but my late memoirs inform me, that Peter had only 20,000 men in this day's engagement, a number not much superior to that of the enemy : but his vigour, his patience, his unwearied perseverance, together with that of his troops, animated by his presence, decided the fate, not of that day only, but of three successive days, during which the fight was renewed at different times.

They made their first attack upon the rear of the Swedish army, near the village of Lesnau, from whence this battle borrows its name.

This first shock was bloody, without Oct. 7. proving decisive. Lewenhaupt retreated into a wood, and thereby saved his baggage. The next morning, when the Swedes were to be driven from this wood, the fight was still more bloody, and more to the advantage of the Russians. Here it was that the czar, seeing his troops in disorder, cried out to fire upon the runaways, and even upon himself, if they saw him turn back. The Swedes were repulsed, but not thrown into confusion.

At length a reinforcement of 4000 dragoons arriving, he fell upon the Swedes a third time, who retreated to a small town called Prospock, where they were again attacked ; they then marched towards the Desna, the Russians still pursuing them ; yet they were never broken, but lost upwards of 8000 men, 17 pieces of cannon, and 44 colours : the czar took 56 officers, and near 900 private men prisoners, and the great convoy of provisions and ammunition that were going to Charles's army, fell into the hands of the conqueror.

This was the first time that the czar in person gained a pitched battle against an enemy who had distinguished himself by so many victories over his troops: he was employed in a general thanksgiving for his success, when he received advice, that general Apraxin had lately gained an advantage over the enemy Sept. 17. my in Ingria, some leagues from Narva, an advantage less considerable indeed than that of Lesnau; but this concurrence of fortunate events greatly raised the hopes and courage of his troops.

Charles XII. heard of these unfortunate tidings, just as he was ready to pass the Desna in the Ukraine. Mazeppa at length joined him; but instead of 20,000 men, and an immense quantity of provisions, which he was to have brought with him, he came with only two regiments, and appeared rather like a fugitive applying for assistance, than a prince, who was bringing powerful succours to his ally. This Cossack had indeed begun his march with near fifteen or sixteen thousand of his people, whom he had told at their first setting out, that they were going against the king of Sweden; that they would have the glory of stopping that hero on his march, and that he would hold himself eternally obliged to them for so great a service.

But when they came within a few leagues of the Desna, he made them acquainted with his real design. These brave people received his declaration with disdain: they refused to betray a monarch, against whom they had no cause of complaint, for the sake of a Swede, who had invaded their country, with an armed force, and who, after leaving it, would be no longer able
to

to defend them, but must abandon them to the mercy of the incensed Russians, and of the Poles, once their masters, and always their enemies: they accordingly returned home, and gave advice to the czar of the defection of their chief; Mazeppa found himself left with only two regiments, the officers of which were in his own pay.

He was still master of some strong posts in the Ukraine, and in particular of Bathurin, the place of his residence, looked upon as the capital of the country of the Cossacks: it is situated near some forests on the Desna, at a great distance from the place where Peter had defeated general Lewenhaupt. There were also some Russian regiments quartered in these districts. Prince Menzikoff was detached from the czar's army, and got thither by round-about marches. Charles could not secure all the passes; he did not even know them all, and had neglected to make himself master of the important post of Starowdoub, which leads directly to the Bathurin, across seven or eight leagues of forest, thro' which the Desna directs its course. His enemy had always the advantage of him, by being better acquainted with the country.

Menzikoff and prince Gallitzin, who had accompanied him, easily made their passage good, and presented them Nov. 14. selves before the town of Bathurin, which surrendered almost without resistance, was plundered and reduced ashes. The Russians made themselves masters of a large magazine destined for the use of the king of Sweden, and of all Mazeppa's treasures. The Cossacks chose another Hetman, named Skoropasky, who

was approved by the czar, who being willing to impress a due sense of the enormous crime of treason on the minds of the people, by a striking example of justice, the archbishop of Kiow, and two other prelates, were ordered to excommunicate Mazeppa publicly; after which he was hanged in effigy, and some of his accomplices were broken upon the wheel.

In the mean while, Charles XII. still at the head of about 25 or 27,000 Swedes, who were reinforced by the remains of Lewenhaupt's army, and the addition of between 2 and 3000 men, whom Mazeppa had brought with him, and still infatuated with the same notion of making all the Ukraine declare for him, passed the Desna, at some distance from Bathurin, and near the Boristhenes, in spite of the czar's troops which surrounded him on all sides; part of whom followed close in the rear, while another part lined the opposite side of the river to oppose his passage.

He continued his march through a desert country, where he met with nothing but burned or ruined villages. The cold began to set in at the beginning of December so extremely sharp, that in one of his marches, near 2000 of his men perished before his eyes: the czar's troops did not suffer near so much, being better supplied; whereas the king of Sweden's army, being almost naked, was necessarily more exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

In this deplorable situation, count Piper, chancellor of Sweden, who never gave his master other than good advice, conjured him to halt, and pass at least the severest part of the win-

winter, in a small town of the Ukraine, called Romna, where he might intrench himself, and get some provisions by the help of Mazeppa; but Charles replied, that "he was not a person to shut himself up in a town." Piper then intreated him to repass the Desna and the Boristhenes, to return back into Poland, to put his troops into winter-quarters, of which they stood so much in need, to make use of the Polish cavalry, which was absolutely necessary; to support the king he had nominated, and, to keep in awe the partisans of Augustus, who began already to bestir themselves. Charles answered him again, "that this would be flying before the czar, that the season would grow milder, and that he must reduce the Ukraine, and march on to Moscow*."

[January 1709.] Both armies remained some weeks inactive, on account of the intenseness of the cold, in the month of January 1709; but, as soon as the men were able to make use of their arms, Charles attacked all the small posts that he found in his way; he was obliged to send parties on every side in search of provisions; that is to say, to scour the country twenty leagues round, and rob all the peasants of their necessary subsistence. Peter, without hurrying himself, kept a strict eye upon all his motions, and suffered the Swedish army to dwindle away by degrees.

It is impossible for the reader to follow the Swedes in their march through these countries; several of the rivers which they crossed are not to be found in the maps: we must not suppose,

* This is acknowledged by Norberg, vol. ii. p. 263.

that geographers are as well acquainted with these countries, as we are with Italy, France, and Germany; geography is, of all the arts, that which still stands the most in need of improvement: and ambition has hitherto been at more pains to desolate the face of the globe, than to give a description of it.

We must content ourselves then with knowing, that Charles traversed the whole Ukraine in the month of February, burning the villages wherever he came, or meeting with others that had been laid in ashes by the Russians. He, advancing south-east, came to those sandy deserts, bordered by mountains that separate the Nogay Tartars from the Don Cossacks. To the eastward of those mountains, are the altars of Alexander. Charles was now on the other side of the Ukraine, in the road that the Tartars take to Russia; and when he was got there, he was obliged to return back again to procure subsistence: the inhabitants, having retired with all their cattle into their dens and lurking places, would sometimes defend their subsistence against the soldiers, who came to deprive them of it. Such of these poor wretches who could be found, were put to death, agreeable to what are falsely called the rules of war. I cannot here forbear transcribing a few lines from Norberg*.

“ As an instance, says he, of the king’s regard
“ to justice, I shall insert a note, which he
“ wrote with his own hand to colonel Heil-
“ men.

“ Colonel,

“ I am very well pleased that you have taken
“ these peasants, who carried off a Swedish sol-
“ dier; as soon as they are convicted of the
“ crime, let them be punished with death, ac-
“ cording to the exigency of the case.

“ CHARLES, and lower down, BUDIS.”

Such are the sentiments of justice and humanity shewn by a king's confessor; but had the peasants of the Ukraine had it in their power to hang up some of those regimented peasants of East Gothland, who thought themselves intitled to come so far to plunder them, their wives, and families, of their subsistence, would not the confessors and chaplains of these Ukrainers have had equal reason to applaud their justice?

Mazeppa had, for a considerable time, been in treaty with the Zaporavians, who dwell about the two shores of the Boristhenes, and of whom part inhabit the islands on that river. It is this division that forms the nation, of whom mention has already been made in the first chapter of this history, and who have neither wives nor families, and subsist entirely by rapine. During the winter they heap up provisions in their islands, which they afterwards go and sell in the summer, in the little town of Pultowa; the rest dwell in small hamlets, to the right and left of this river. Altogether chuse a particular Hetman, and this Hetman is subordinate to him of the Ukraine. The person, at that time, at the head of the Zaporavians, came to meet Mazeppa; and these two barbarians had an interview, at which each of them had an horse's tail,

and a club born before him, as ensigns of honour.

To shew what this Hetman of the Zaporavians, and his people were, I think it not unworthy of history, to relate the manner in which this treaty was concluded. Mazeppa gave a great feast to the Hetman of the Zaporavians, and his principal officers, who were all served in plate. As soon as these chiefs had made themselves drunk with brandy, they took an oath (without stirring from table) upon the Evangelists, to supply Charles with men and provisions; after which they carried off all the plate and other table-furniture. Mazeppa's steward ran after them, and remonstrated, that such behaviour ill-suited with the doctrine of the gospels on which they had so lately sworn. Some of Mazeppa's domestics were for taking the plate away from them by force; but the Zaporavians went in a body to complain to Mazeppa, of the unparalleled affront offered to such brave fellows, and demanded to have the steward delivered up to them, that they might punish him according to law. This was accordingly complied with, and the Zaporavians, according to law, tossed this poor man from one to another like a ball, and afterwards plunged a knife to his heart.

Such were the new allies that Charles XII. was obliged to receive, part of whom he formed into a regiment of 2000 men; the remainder marched in separate bodies against the Cossacks and Calmucks of the czar's party, that were stationed about that district.

The little town of Pultowa, with which those Zaporavians carry on a trade, was filled with provisions, and might have served Charles for a place

place of arms. It is situated on the river Worslaw, near a chain of mountains, which command it on the north side. To the eastward is a vast desert. The western part is the most fruitful, and the best peopled. The Worslaw empties itself into the Boristhenes, about fifteen leagues lower down; from Pultowa, one may go northward, through the defiles which communicate with the road to Moscow, a passage used by the Tartars. It is very difficult of access, and the precautions taken by the czar had rendered it almost impervious; but nothing appeared impossible to Charles, and he depended upon marching to Moscow, as soon as he had made himself master of Pultowa; with this view he laid siege to that town in the beginning of May.

C H A P. XIII.

Battle of PULTOWA.

The year **H**ERE it was that Peter expected 1709. him; he had disposed the several divisions of his army at convenient distances for joining each other, and marching all together against the besiegers: he had visited the countries which surround the Ukraine; namely, the duchy of Severia, watered by the Desna, already made famous by his victory; the country of Boleho, in which the Occa has its source; the deserts and mountains leading to the Palus Mæotis; and lately he had been in the neighbourhood of Asoph, where he caused that harbour to be cleansed, new ships to be built, and the citadel of Taganroc to be repaired. Thus did he employ the time that passed between the battles of Lesnau and Pultowa, in preparing for the defence of his dominions. As soon as he heard the Swedes had laid siege to the town, he mustered all his forces: the horse, dragoons, infantry, cossacks, and calmucks, advanced from different quarters. His army was well provided with necessaries of every kind; large cannon, field-pieces, ammunition of all sorts, provisions, and even medicines for the sick: this was another degree of superiority which he had acquired over his rival.

On the 15th day of June 1709, he appeared before Pultowa with an army of about 60,000 effective men; the river Worklaw was between him and Charles. The besiegers were encamp-
ed

ed on the north-west side of that river, the Russians on the south-east.

Peter ascends the river above the town, fixes his barges, marches over with his army, and draws a long line of entrenchments, which were begun and completed in one night in the face of the enemy. Charles might then judge, whether the person whom he had so much despised, and whom he thought of dethroning at Moscow, understood the art of war. This disposition being made, Peter posted his cavalry between two woods, and covered it with several redoubts, lined with artillery. Having thus taken all the necessary measures, he went to reconnoitre the enemies camp, in order to form the attack.

July 3.

July 6.

This battle was to decide the fate of Russia, Poland, and Sweden, and of two monarchs, on whom the eyes of all Europe were fixed. The greatest part of those nations who were attentive to these important concerns, were equally ignorant of the place where these two princes were, and of their situation: but knowing that Charles XII. had set out from Saxony, at the head of a victorious army, and that he was driving his enemy every where before him, they no longer doubted that he would at length entirely crush him; and that as he had already given laws to Denmark, Poland, and Germany, he would now dictate conditions of peace in the Kremlin of Moscow, and make a new czar, after having already made a new king of Poland. I have seen letters from several public ministers to their respective courts, confirming this general opinion.

The

The risk was far from being equal between these two great rivals. If Charles lost a life, which he had so often, and wantonly exposed, there would after all have been but one hero less in the world. The provinces of the Ukraine, the frontiers of Lithuania and of Russia, would then rest from their calamities, and a stop would be put to the general devastation, which had so long been their scourge. Poland would, together with her tranquillity, recover her lawful prince, who had been lately reconciled to the czar his benefactor; and lastly, Sweden, tho' exhausted of men and money, might find motives of consolation under her heavy losses.

But if the czar perished, those immense labours which had been of such utility to mankind, would be buried with him, and the most extensive empire into the world would again relapse into the chaos from whence it had been so lately taken.

There had already been some skirmishes between the detached parties of the Swedes and Russians, under the walls of the town. In one of these rencounters, Charles had been June 27. wounded by a musket-ball, which had shattered the bones of his foot: he underwent several painful operations, which he bore with his usual fortitude, and had been confined to his bed for some days. In this condition he was informed, that Peter intended to give him battle; his notions of honour would not suffer him to wait to be attacked in his entrenchments. Accordingly he gave orders for quitting them, and was carried himself in a litter. Peter the Great acknowledges, that the Swedes attacked the redoubts, lined with artillery,

lery, that covered his cavalry, with such obstinate valour, that, notwithstanding the strongest resistance, supported by a continual fire, the enemy made themselves masters of two redoubts. Some writers say, that when the Swedish infantry found themselves in possession of the two redoubts, they thought the day their own, and began to cry out Victory. The chaplain Norberg, who was at some great distance from the field of battle, amongst the baggage (which was indeed his proper place) pretends, that this was a calumny; but whether the Swedes cried out victory or not, it is certain they were not victorious. The fire from the other redoubts was kept up without ceasing, and the resistance made by the Russians in every part, was as firm as the attack of their enemies was vigorous. They did not make one irregular movement; the czar drew up his army without the entrenchments in excellent order, and with surprising dispatch.

The battle now became general. Peter acted as major-general; Baur commanded the right wing, Menzikoff the left, and Sheremetow the centre. The action lasted two hours: Charles with a pistol in his hand went from rank to rank, carried in a litter, on the shoulders of his drabans; one of which was killed by a cannonball, and at the same time the litter was shattered in pieces. He then ordered his men to carry him upon their pikes; for it would have been difficult in so smart an action, let Norberg say as he pleases, to find a fresh litter ready made. Peter received several shot thro' his cloaths and his hat; both princes were continually in the midst of the fire, during the whole action. At length,

length, after two hours desperate engagement, the Swedes were attacked on all sides, and fell into confusion; so that Charles was obliged to fly before him whom he had hitherto held in so much contempt. This very hero, who could not mount his saddle during the battle, now fled for his life on horse-back; necessity lent him strength in his retreat; he suffered the most excruciating pain, which was increased by the mortifying reflection of being vanquished without resource. The Russians reckoned 9224 Swedes left dead on the field of battle, and between two and three thousand made prisoners in the action, the chief of which were cavalry.

Charles XII. fled with the greatest precipitation, attended only by 4000 men, a few field pieces, and a very small quantity of provisions and ammunition. He directed his march southward, towards the Boristhenes, between the two rivers Worslaw and Psol, or Sol, in the country of the Zaporavians. Beyond the Boristhenes, are vast deserts, which lead to the frontiers of Turkey. Norberg affirms, that the victors durst not pursue Charles; and yet he acknowledges, that prince Menzikoff appeared on the neighbouring heights, with 10,000 horse, July 12. and a considerable train of artillery, while the king was passing the Boristhenes.

Fourteen thousand Swedes surrendered themselves prisoners of war to these 10,000 Russians; and Lewenhaupt, who commanded them, signed the said capitulation, by which he gave up those Zaporavians who had engaged in the service of his master, and were then in the fugitive army. The chief persons taken prisoners in the battle, and by the capitulation, were count Piper,

per, the first minister, with two secretaries of state, and two of the cabinet, field marshal Renschild, the generals Lewenhaupt, Shlippenbac, Rozen, Stakelber, Creutz, and Hamilton, with three general aides-de-camp, the auditor general of the army, fifty-nine staff-officers, five colonels, among whom was the prince of Wirtemberg, 16,942 private men and non-commissioned officers : in short, reckoning the king's own domestics, and others, the conqueror had no less than 18,746 prisoners in his power, to whom, if we add 9224 slain in battle, and near 2000 men that passed the Boristhenes with Charles, it appears plainly, that he had, on that memorable day, no less than 27,000 effective men under his command *.

Charles had begun his march from Saxony with 45,000 men, Lewenhaupt had brought upwards of 16,000 out of Livonia, and yet scarce an handful of men were left of all this powerful army ; of a numerous train of artillery, part lost in his marches, and part buried in the morasses ; he had now remaining only eighteen brass cannon, two haubitizers, and twelve mortars, and with inconsiderable force, he had undertaken the siege of Pultowa, and had attacked an army provided with a formidable artillery. Therefore he is, with justice, accused of having shewn more courage than prudence, after his leaving Germany. On the side of the Russians, there were

* The memoirs of Peter the Great, by the pretended boyard Iwan Nestefuranoy, printed at Amsterdam in 1739, say, that the king of Sweden, before he passed the Boristhenes, sent a general officer with proposals of peace to the czar. The four volumes of these memoirs are either a collection of untruths and absurdities, or compilations from common newspapers.

no more than fifty-two officers, and 1293 private men killed; an undeniable proof that the disposition of the Russian troops was better than those of Charles, and that their fire was infinitely superior to that of the Swedes.

We find, in the memoirs of a foreign minister to the court of Russia, that Peter being informed of Charles's design to take refuge in Turkey, wrote a friendly letter to him, entreating him not to take so desperate a resolution, but rather to trust himself into his hands, than in those of the natural enemy to all christian princes. He gave him, at the same time, his word of honour not to detain him prisoner, but to terminate all their differences by a reasonable peace. This letter was sent by an express as far as the river Bug, which separates the deserts of the Ukraine from the Grand Seignor's dominions.

As the messenger did not reach that place, till Charles had entered Turkey, he brought back the letter to his master. The same minister adds further, that he had this account from the very person who was charged with the letter †. This anecdote is not altogether improbable, but I do not meet with it either in Peter's journals, or in any of the papers intrusted to my care. What is of greater importance in relation to this battle, was, its being the only one of the many that have stained the earth with blood, that instead of producing only destruction, has proved beneficial to mankind, by enabling the czar to civilize so considerable a part of the world.

† This fact is likewise found in a letter, printed before the *Anecdotes of Russia*, page 23.

There have been more than two hundred pitched battles fought in Europe from the commencement of this century, to the present year. The most signal, and the most bloody victories, have produced no other consequences, than the reduction of a few provinces, ceded afterwards by treaties, and retaken again by other battles. Armies of an hundred thousand men have frequently engaged each other in the field ; but the greatest efforts have been attended with only slight and momentary successes ; the most trivial causes have been productive of the greatest effects. There is no instance in modern history of any war, that has compensated by even a better good for the many evils it has occasioned ; but, from the battle of Pultowa, the greatest empire under the sun has derived its present happiness and prosperity.

C H A P. XIX.

Consequences of the battle of PULTOWA. CHARLES XII. takes refuge among the Turks. AUGUSTUS, whom he had dethroned, recovers his dominions. Conquests of PETER the Great.

The year **T**HE chief prisoners of rank were 1709. now presented to the conqueror, who ordered their swords to be returned, and invited them to dinner. It is a well known fact, that, on drinking to the officers, he said, "To the health of my masters in the art of war." However, most of his masters, particularly the subaltern officers and all the private men, were soon afterwards sent into Siberia. There was no cartel established here for exchange of prisoners between the Russians and Swedes; the czar indeed had proposed one before the siege of Pultowa, but Charles rejected the offer, and his troops were in every thing the victims of his inflexible pride.

It was this unseasonable obstinacy that occasioned all the misfortunes of this prince in Turkey, and a series of adventures more becoming a hero of romance than a wise or prudent king; for as soon as he arrived at Bender, he was advised to write to the Grand Vizir, as is the custom among the Turks; but this he thought would be demeaning himself too far. The like obstinacy embroiled him with all the ministers of the Porte one after another; in short, he knew
not

not how to accommodate himself either to times or circumstances *.

The first news of the battle of Pultowa produced a general revolution in minds and affairs in Poland, Saxony, Sweden, and Silesia. Charles, while all-powerful in those parts, had obliged the emperor Joseph to take an hundred and five churches from the catholics in favour of the Silesians of the confession of Augsbourg. The catholics then no sooner received news of the defeat of Charles, than they repossessed themselves of all the Lutheran temples. The Saxons now thought of nothing but being revenged for the extortions of a conqueror, who had robbed them, according to their own account, of twenty-three millions of crowns.

The king of Poland their elector immediately protested against the abdication that had been extorted from him, Aug. 8, and being now reconciled to the czar, he left no stone unturned to reascend the Polish throne. Sweden, overwhelmed with consternation, thought her king for a long time dead, and in this uncertainty the senate knew not what to resolve.

Peter in the mean time determined to make the best use of his victory, and therefore dispatched marshal Sheremetow with an army into Livonia, on the frontiers of which province that general had so often signalized himself. Prince Menzikoff was sent in haste with a numerous body

* La Motraye, in the relations of his travels, quotes a letter from Charles XII. to the Grand Vizir; but this letter is false, as are most of the relations of that mercenary writer, and Norberg himself acknowledges that the king of Sweden never could be prevailed on to write to the Vizir.

of cavalry to second the few troops left in Poland, to encourage the nobles who were in the interest of Augustus, to drive out his competitor, who was now considered as no better than a rebel, and to disperse a body of Swedish troops that were still left in that kingdom under the command of the general Crassau.

The czar soon after sets out in person, marches through the province of Kiow, and the palatinates of Chelm and Upper Volhinia, and at length arrives at Lublin, where he concert measures with the general of Lithuania. He then reviews the crown-troops, who all take the oath of allegiance to king Augustus; from thence he proceeds to Warsaw, and at The-
Sept. 18. ra enjoyed the most glorious of all triumphs, that of receiving the thanks of a king, whom he had reinstated in his dominions. There it was that he
Octob. 7. concluded a treaty against Sweden, with the kings of Denmark, Poland, and Prussia; in which it was resolved to recover from Charles all the conquests of Gustavus Adolphus. Peter revived the ancient pretensions of the czars to Livonia, Ingria, Carelia, and part of Finland; Denmark laid claim to Scania, and the king of Prussia to Pomerania.

Thus had Charles XII. by his unsuccessful valour, shook the noble edifice that had been erected by the prosperous bravery of his ancestor Gustavus Adolphus. The Polish nobility came in on all sides to renew their oaths to their king, or to ask pardon for having defeated him; and almost the whole kingdom acknowledged Peter for its protector.

To

To the victorious arms of the czar, to these new treaties, and to this sudden revolution, Stanislaus had nothing to oppose but a voluntary resignation: he published a writing called *Universale*, in which he declares himself ready to resign the crown, if the republic required it.

Peter having concerted all the necessary measures with the king of Poland, and ratified the treaty with Denmark, set out directly to finish his negociation with the king of Prussia. It was not then usual for sovereign princes to perform the function of their own ambassadors. Peter was the first who introduced this custom, which has been followed by very few. The elector of Brandenburg, the first king of Prussia, had a conference with the czar at Marenverder, a small town situated in the western part of Pomerania, and built by the old Teutonic knights, and included in the limits of Prussia, lately erected into a kingdom. This country indeed was poor, and of a small extent; but its new king, whenever he travelled, displayed the utmost magnificence; with great splendor he had received czar Peter at his first passing through his dominions, when that prince quitted his empire to go in search of instructions among strangers. But he received the conqueror of Charles XII. in a still more pompous manner. Peter for this time concluded only a Oct. 20. defensive treaty with him, which afterwards, however, completed the ruin of Sweden.

Not an instant of time was lost. Peter having proceeded with the greatest dispatch in his negotiations, which elsewhere are wont to take up so much time, goes and joins his army then
before

before Riga, the capital of Livonia; Nov. 21. he began by bombarding the place, and fired off the three first bombs himself; then changed the siege into a blockade, and when well assured, that Riga could not escape him, he repaired to his city of Petersburg, to inspect and forward the works carrying on there, the new buildings, and finishing of his fleet; and having laid the keel

Dec. 3. of a ship of 54 guns, with his own hands, he returns to Moscow. Here he amused himself with assisting in the preparations for the triumphal entry, which he exhibited in that capital. He directed every thing relating to that festival, and was himself the principal contriver and architect.

The year 1710, Jan. 1.] He opened the year 1710 with this solemnity, so necessary to his subjects, whom it inspired with notions of grandeur, and was highly pleasing to every one who had been fearful of seeing those enter their walls as conquerors, over whom they now triumphed. Seven magnificent arches were erected, under which passed in triumph the artillery, standards, and colours, taken from the enemy, with their officers, generals, and ministers, who had been made prisoners, all on foot, amidst the ringing of bells, the sound of trumpets, the discharge of an hundred pieces of cannon, and the acclamations of an innumerable concourse of people, whose voices rent the air as soon as the cannon ceased firing. The procession was closed by the victorious army, with the generals at its head; and Peter, who marched in his rank of major-general. At each triumphal arch stood the deputies of the several orders of the state; and at

the last was a chosen band of young gentlemen, the sons of boyards, clad in Roman habits, who presented a crown of laurels to their victorious monarch.

This public festival was followed by another ceremony, which proved no less satisfactory than the former. In the year 1708 happened an accident the more disagreeable to Peter, as his arms were at that time unsuccessful. Mattheof his ambassador to the court of London, having had his audience of leave of Queen Anne, was arrested for debt at the suit of some English merchants, and carried before a justice of peace to give security for the monies he owed there. The merchants insisted that the laws of commerce ought to prevail before the privileges of foreign ministers; the czar's ambassador, and with him all the public ministers, protested against this proceeding, alledging, that their persons ought to be always inviolable. The czar wrote to Queen Anne, demanding satisfaction for the insult offered him in the person of his ambassador.

But the queen had it not in her power to gratify him, because, by the laws of England, tradesmen were allowed to prosecute their debtors, and there was no law that excepted public ministers from such prosecution * The murder of Patkul, the czar's ambassador, who had been executed the year before by the orders of Charles XII. had encouraged the English to shew

* The czar, says the preface to lord Whitworth's account of Russia, who had been absolute enough to civilize savages, had no idea, could conceive none, of the privileges of a nation civilized in the only rational manner by laws and liberties. He demanded immediate and severe punishment of the offenders: he demanded it of a princess, whom he thought interested to af-

shew so little regard to a character which had been so cruelly prophaned. The other public ministers who were then at the court of London,

first the sacredness of the persons of monarchs, even in their representatives; and he demanded it with threats of wreaking his vengeance on all English merchants and subjects, established in his dominions. In this light the menaces were formidable, otherwise, happily, the rights of the whole people were more sacred here than the persons of foreign ministers. The czar's memorials urged the queen with the satisfaction which she herself had extorted, when only the boat and servants of the earl of Manchester had been insulted at Venice. That state had broken through the fundamental laws, to content the queen of Great Britain. How noble a picture of government, when a monarch that can force another nation to infringe its constitution, dare not violate his own? One may imagine with what difficulty our secretaries of state must have laboured through all the ambages of phrase in English, French, German, and Russ, to explain to Muscovite ears and Muscovite understandings, the meaning of indictments, pleadings, precedents, juries, and verdicts; and how impatiently Peter must have listened to promises of a hearing next term? With what astonishment must he have beheld a great queen, engaging to endeavour to prevail on her parliament to pass an act to prevent any such outrage for the future? What honour does it not reflect on the memory of that princess to own to an arbitrary emperor, that even to appease him she dare not put the meanest of her subjects to death uncondemned by law. There are, says she, in one of her dispatches to him, insuperable difficulties, with respect to the ancient and fundamental laws of the government of our people; which we fear do not permit so severe and rigorous a sentence to be given, as your imperial majesty at first seemed to expect in this case; and we persuade ourself that your imperial majesty, who are a prince famous for clemency and exact justice, will not require us, who are the guardian and protectresses of the laws, to inflict a punishment upon our subjects which the law does not empower us to do. Words so venerable and heroic, that this broil ought to become history, and be exempted from the oblivion due to the silly squabbles of ambassadors and their privileges. If Anne deserved praise for her conduct on this occasion, it reflects still greater glory on Peter, that this ferocious man should listen to these details, and had moderation and justice enough to be persuaded by the reason of them.

were

were obliged to be bound for the czar's ambassador; and at length all the queen could do in his favour, was to prevail on her parliament to pass an act, by which no one for the future could arrest an ambassador for debt: but after the battle of Pultowa the English court thought proper to give satisfaction to the czar.

The queen made by a formal embassy an excuse for what had passed. Mr. Whitworth * the person charged with this Feb. 16. commission, began his harangue with the following words, "Most High and mighty Emperor." He told the czar, that the person who had presumed to arrest his ambassador, had been imprisoned, and rendered infamous. There was no truth in all this, but it was sufficient that he said so, and the title of Emperor, which the queen had not given Peter before the battle of Pultowa, plainly shewed the consideration he had now acquired in Europe.

This title had been already granted him in Holland; not only by those who had been his fellow-workmen in the dock-yards at Saardam, and seemed to interest themselves most in his glory, but likewise by the principal persons in the state, who unanimously stiled him Emperor, and made public rejoicings for his victory, even in the presence of the Swedish minister.

The universal reputation which he had acquired by his victory of Pultowa, was still further encreased by his not suffering a moment to pass without making some advantages of it. In the first place, he laid siege to Elbing, a Hanse town of Regal Prussia in Poland; where the Swedes had still a garrison. The Russians scaled the

* Afterwards created lord Whitworth, by king George I. |

walls, entered the town, and the garrison surrendered prisoners of war. This March 11. was one of the largest magazines belonging to Charles XII. The conquerors found therein 183 brass cannon, and 157 mortars. Immediately after the reduction of Elbing, Peter re-marched from Moscow to Petesbourg; as soon as he arrived at this latter place, he took shipping under his new fortrefs of Cronstot, coasted along the shore of Carelia, and notwithstanding a violent storm, brought his fleet safely before Wyburg, the capital of Carelia in Finland; while his land-forces advanced over the frozen morasses, and in a short time the capital of Livonia beheld itself closely blockaded; and after a breach was made in the walls, Wyburg surrendered, and the garrison, consisting of 4000 men, capitulated, but did not receive the honours of war, being made prisoners notwithstanding the capitulation. Peter charged the enemy with several infractions of this kind, and promised to set these troops at liberty, as soon as he should receive satisfaction from the Swedes for his complaints. On this occasion the king of Sweden was to be consulted, who continued as inflexible as ever; and those soldiers, whom, by a little concession, he might have delivered from their confinement, remained in captivity. Thus did king William III. in 1695, arrest marshal Boufflers, notwithstanding the capitulation of Namur. There have been several instances of such violations of treaties; but it is to be wished there never had been any.

After

After the taking of this capital, the blockade of Riga was soon changed into a regular siege, and pushed with vigour. They were obliged to break the ice on the river Dwina, which waters the walls of the city. An epidemical disorder, which had raged some time in those parts, now got amongst the besiegers, and carried off 9000; nevertheless the siege was not in the least slackened; it lasted a considerable time, but at length the garrison capitulated, and were allowed the honours of war; but July 15. it was stipulated by the capitulation, that all the Livonian officers and soldiers should enter into the Russian service, as natives of a country that had been dismembered from that empire, and usurped by the ancestors of Charles XII. But the Livonians were restored to the privileges, of which his father had stript them, and all the officers entered into the czar's service: this was the most signal satisfaction that Peter could take for the murder of his ambassador Patkul, a Livonian, who had been put to death, for defending those privileges. The garrison consisted of near 5000 men. A short time afterwards the citadel of Pennamund was taken, and the besiegers found in the town and fort above 800 pieces of artillery of different kinds.

Nothing was now wanting to make Peter entirely master of the province of Carelia, but the possession of the strong town of Kexholm, built on an island in the lake of Ladoga, and deemed impregnable: it was bombarded soon after, and surrendered in a short time. The island of Oesel in the sea bordering upon the north of Livonia, was subdued with the same rapidity.

Sep. 19.
Sep. 23.

On the side of Esthonia, a province of Livonia, towards the north, and on the gulph of Finland, are the towns of Pernau and Revel : by the reduction of these Peter completed the conquest of all Livonia. Pernau surrendered after a siege of a few days, and Revel capitulated without waiting to have a single cannon fired against it ; but the besieged found means to escape out of the hands of the conquerors, at the very time that they were surrendering themselves prisoners of war : for some Swedish ships having anchored in the road, under favour of the night, the garrison and most of the citizens embarked on board, and when the besiegers entered the town, they were surprised to find it deserted. When Charles XII. gained the victory of Narva, little did he expect that his troops would one day be driven to use such artifices.

In Poland, Stanislaus finding his party entirely ruined, had taken refuge in Pomerania, which still belonged to Charles XII. Augustus resumed the government, and it was difficult to decide who had acquired most glory, Charles in dethroning him, or Peter in restoring him to his crown.

The subjects of the king of Sweden were still more unfortunate than that monarch himself. The contagious distemper, which had made such havock over Livonia, passed from thence into Sweden ; where in the city of Stockholm, it carried off thirty thousand persons : it likewise desolated the provinces already thinned of their inhabitants ; for during the space of ten years successively, most of the able-bodied men had

had quitted their countty to follow their master, and perished in foreign climes.

Charles's ill fortune pursued him also in Pomerania: his army had retired thither from Poland, to the number of 11,000; the czar, the kings of Denmark and Prussia, the elector of Hanover, and the duke of Holstein, joined together to render this army useless, and to compel general Craffau, who commanded it, to submit to a neutrality. The regency of Stockholm hearing no news of their king, and distracted by the mortality that raged in that city, were glad to sign this neutrality, which seemed to deliver one of its provinces at least from the horrors of war. The emperor of Germany favoured this extraordinary convention, by which it was stipulated, that the Swedish army then in Pomerania should not march from thence to assist their monarch in any other part of the world; nay, it was furthermore resolved in the Germany, empire, to raise an army to enforce the execution of this unparalleled convention. The reason of this was, that the emperor of Germany who was then at war with France, was in hopes to engage the Swedish army to enter into his service. This whole negotiation was carried on while Peter was subduing Livonia, Esthonia and Carelia.

Charles XII. who was all this time at Bender, putting every spring in motion to engage the divan to declare war against the czar, received this news as one of the severest blows his untoward fortune had dealt him: he could not brook, that his senate at Stockholm should pretend to tie up the hands of his army; and it was on this occasion that he wrote them word,

he would send one of his boots to govern them.

The Danes, in the mean time, were making preparations to invade Sweden; so that every nation in Europe was now engaged in war. Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, Germany, Holland, and England, were contending for the dominions left by Charles II. of Spain; and the whole North was up in arms against Charles XII. There wanted only a quarrel with the Ottoman empire, for every village in Europe to be exposed to the ravages of war. This quarrel happened soon afterwards, when Peter had attained to the summit of his glory, and precisely for that reason.

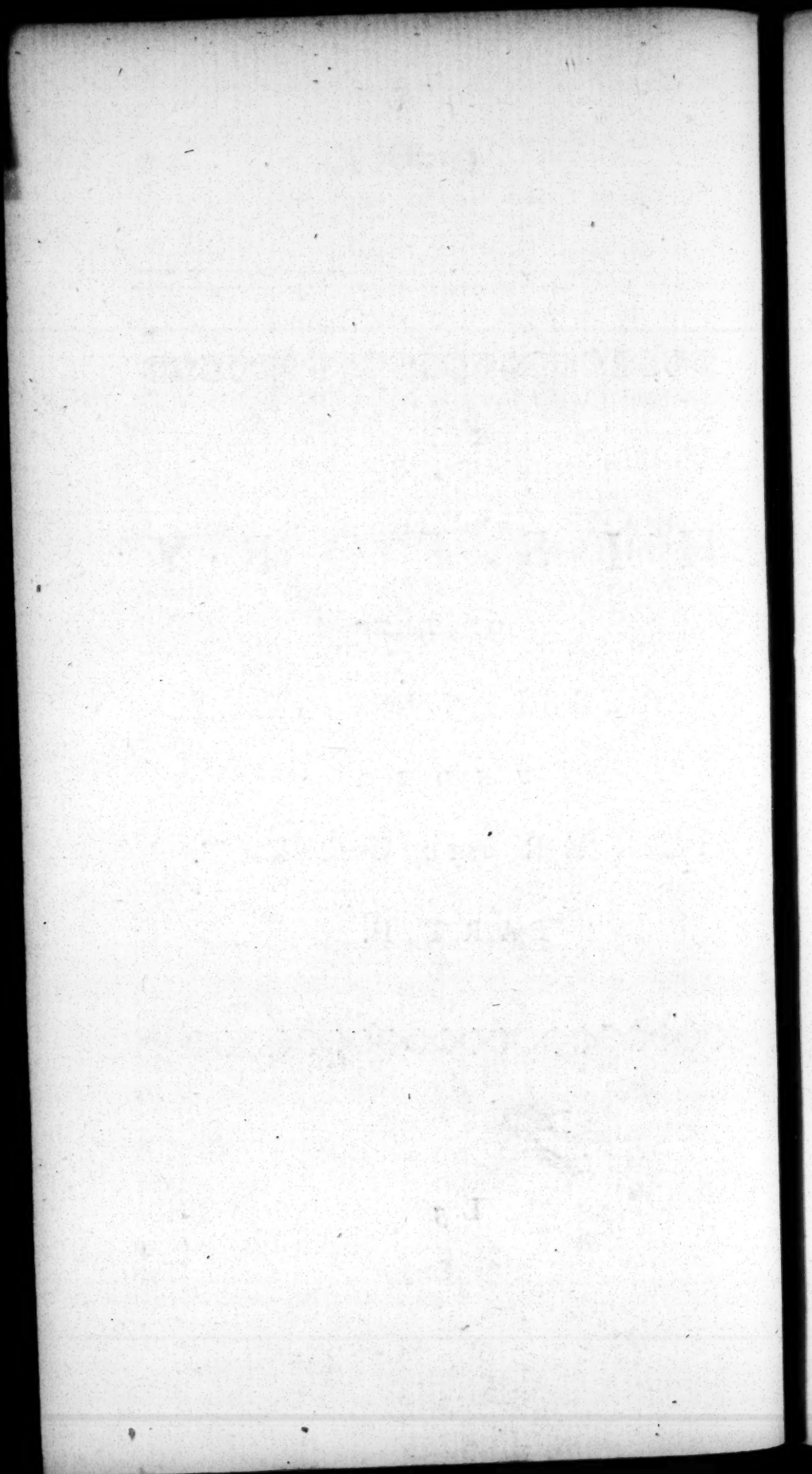
END of the FIRST PART.

THE



THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
UNDER
PETER THE GREAT.
PART II.





Advertisement.

THE Russian empire is now become so considerable in Europe, that the history of Peter, its real founder, is thereby rendered still more interesting. This prince gave a new face to the North, and, after his decease, we have seen his nation on the point of changing the fate of Germany, and extending its influence over France and Spain, notwithstanding the immense distance of those kingdoms.

The establishment of this empire forms perhaps the most considerable æra in the annals of Europe, next to that of the discovery of the new world; and it is this consideration alone, which induces the author of the first part of the History of Peter the Great, to present the public with the second.

There are some mistakes in several of the impressions of the first part, of which he thinks necessary to give the reader notice, and are as follows: page 3, after the words *in the route which the caravans might take, add in travelling through the Calmuck plains, and over the great desert of Kobi.* Page 6, for *at the junction,* read *at the mouth.* Page 17, for *Red Russia,* read *with a part of Red Russia.* And here it may not be

improper to acquaint those critics, who know little of the matter, that Volhinia, Podolia, and some of the neighbouring countries, have been called Red Russia by all geographers. Page 39. the editor, deceived by the want of a cypher in the MS. copy, has printed 72,000 *bondmen belonging to the monks*, instead of *seven hundred and twenty thousand*. Page 44, after the words, *when the Greek church was first established in Russia*, take out what follows, and in its place insert, *Chrysoberg, patriarch of Constantinople, sent a bishop to baptise Wolodimer, in order that he might, by that means, add this part of the world to his patriarchal see; Wolodimer then completed the work that had been begun by his father. One Michael, a native of Syria, was the first metropolitan of Russia*. Page 73, *He looked upon the jesuits as dangerous politicians*, to which may be added, that the jesuits, who introduced themselves into Russia in the year 1685, were driven out of that empire again in 1689, and having a second time got footing, they were finally expelled in 1718.

Page 60, for *daughter of the secretary Nariskin*, read *daughter of secretary Apraxin* *.

The title of *small* may be continued to the country of Orembourg, because that government is in effect small in comparison of Siberia, on which it borders. For *the skin of a sheep*, which several travellers affirm to be worshipped by the Ostiacks, may be substituted that of a *bear*; for if these honest people are supposed to pay divine worship to a thing, because it is use-

* This mistake we have already corrected in the note to that page.

ful to them, the fur of a bear is certainly a greater object of adoration with them than a sheep's skin; but he must surely wear an ass's skin, who would lay any stress on such trifling anecdotes.

Whether the barks built by the czar Peter I. were, or were not called *half galleys*, or whether this prince lived at first in a wooden house, or in one built of brick, will, I believe, be thought an article of very little importance.

There are, however, some things more deserving the attention of a judicious reader. It is said, for instance, in the first volume, that the inhabitants of Kamtschatka have no religion amongst them; but from certain memorials of a latter date, I learn, that this savage people have their divines as well as us, who make the inhabitants of this peninsula to be descended from a superior being, whom they call *Kouthou*. These memorials likewise assert, that they pay no worship to this deity, and express neither love nor fear for him.

Hence it appears, that tho' they have a mythology, yet they have no religion; this may be true, but it is not very probable. Fear is one of the natural attributes of man. It is said, furthermore, that, in the midst of their absurdities, they make a distinction of things allowed, and things forbidden; among the former, they reckon the indulging all their passions; and, among the latter, the sharpening a knife, or an hatchet while they are travelling, or the saving a person from drowning: but if it is held a sin by these people, to save the life of a fellow-creature when in danger, they are in that respect certainly different from all other people in the world,

world, who instinctively fly to the assistance of each other, when interest and passion does not get the better of their natural inclination. One would imagine, that they could never have thought of making an action criminal, which in itself is so common and necessary, that it is not even meritorious, but by a philosophy equally false and superstitious, which would inculcate, that we are not in any thing to oppose destiny, and that no one ought to save a man whom God has preordained to be drowned: but these barbarians have not the least knowledge even of a false philosophy; and yet we are told, that they celebrate a great feast, which they call by a word, which in their language signifies *purification*: but from what have they to purify themselves, if they hold every thing to be allowed? and *for* what, if they neither fear nor love their god *Kouthou*?

Their notions are, doubtless, in many respects contradictory, as are indeed those of almost every other people; with this difference, that theirs arise from a want of understanding, ours from an abuse of it. We abound much more in contradictions, because we are much greater reasoners.

As they acknowledge a kind of God, so they have also their evil spirits. Lastly, they have forcerers and magicians amongst them, as there have always been amongst all nations, even the most civilized. In Kamtschatka, old women are looked upon to be witches, as they were amongst us, till we had attained to a higher degree of natural knowledge. Hence we find, it has ever been the lot of human understanding, to entertain absurd notions, founded on our curiosity and on our weakness. The people of
Kamt.

Kamtshatka have also their prophets, who explain their dreams ; and it is not long since we had such amongst us.

After the court of Russia had subjected these people, by building five fortresses in their country, they instituted the christian religion of the Greek church amongst them. A Russian gentleman, perfectly well acquainted with these people, informed me, that one of their greatest objections to receiving it was, that they were certain it could not be instituted for them, inasmuch as bread and wine were essential parts of our holy rites, whereas they had neither bread nor wine in their country.

In other respects these people merit very little notice. I shall only make one observation in relation to them, namely, that if we cast our eyes on three-fourths of America, the whole southern part of Africa, and on the north, from Lapland as far as the sea of Japan, we shall find one half of the human race to be very little superior to the people of Kamtshatka.

And here it may be proper to observe to the reader, that the famous geographer De L'Isle calls this country Kamtshat, as the French and Italians generally retrench the *ka* and *kay*, which terminate most of the Russian names.

But there is an article of greater importance, and which may concern the dignity of crowned heads. Olearius, who, in 1634, accompanied the envoy of Holstien into Russia and Persia, relates in the 3d book of his history, that czar Iwan Basilowitz banished the emperor's ambassador into Siberia. This is a fact which I do not know to have found related by any other historian. It is hardly probable that the emperor
would

would have quietly submitted to so extraordinary an insult, and open violation of the laws of nations.

The same Olearius says in another place, “ We began our journey the 13th Feb. 1634, “ in company with an ambassador from the court “ of France, called the count of Tallerand, and “ prince of Challais, &c. who had been sent by “ Lewis, together with one James Ruffel, on “ an embassy to Turkey and Muscovy; but his “ colleague did him so many bad offices with “ the patriarch of Russia, that the great duke “ banished him into Siberia.”

In the same book he says, that this ambassador, the prince of Challais, and the befromentioned Ruffel his colleague, who was a merchant, were sent as envoys by Henry IV. It is not very likely that Henry IV. who died 1610, should have sent an embassy to Russia in 1634; and if Lewis XIII. had sent as his ambassador, a person of so illustrious a house as that of Tallerand, he would hardly have given him a merchant for his colleague; all Europe would have known of this embassy, and an insult of so singular a nature offered to the king of France would have made still more noise.

I have already disputed this improbable fact in the first part of this history; but finding that it nevertheless continued to gain some credit, I thought it necessary to search the register of foreign affairs in France, for clearer information on this head; and find that the following incident gave rise to this mistake of Olearius.

There was in fact a person of the family of Tallerand, who having a great passion for travelling,

velling, made a voyage to Turkey, without acquainting his family of his design, or furnishing himself with the necessary letters of recommendation. At the court of Moscow, he met with a Dutch merchant, named Russel, who acted as agent for a company of merchants, and who had a correspondence with the French ministry; with this man the marquis of Tallera joined company to go on a tour to Persia; but having had some dispute with his fellow-traveller by the way, this latter accused him falsely to the patriarch of Moscow; and he was actually banished into Siberia. However, having found means to make his situation known to his family, at the end of about three years, Mr. Des Noyers obtained his release of the court of Moscow.

Here then we have this story set in its true light, and which would not merit a place in history, but as it may serve to put the reader upon his guard against the multitude of anecdotes of a similar nature, with which the relations of most travellers abound.

There are historical errors, and historical falsehoods. This relation of Olearius is only an error; but when we are told, that a czar caused an ambassador's hat to be nailed to his head, that is a falsehood. A writer may be deceived, in regard to the number or force of the ships that compose a naval armament, or in regard to the extent of a country; but these only are errors, and of a very pardonable kind. Again, those who repeat the fabulous accounts of antiquity, in which the origin of all nations is enveloped, may be accused of a weakness common to all the writers of old times; but this is not falsifying, it is

is properly speaking no more than copying tales.

We are also frequently led by inadvertency into faults, which cannot be called falsehoods: there is, for instance, when we read in Hubner's geography, that the boundaries of Europe are in that place where the river Oby empties itself into the Black sea, and that Europe contains 30 millions of inhabitants; these are inaccuracies, which a reader of any knowledge in history can easily rectify.

The same treatise frequently presents us with large towns strongly fortified and well peopled, which are in reality no other than insignificant villages in a manner uninhabited. But here it is easily perceived that time has totally changed the face of things; that the author has consulted only ancient writers, and that what was matter of fact in their time, ceases to be so at present.

Some writers again are mistaken in the inferences they draw from facts. Peter the Great abolished the patriarchal dignity. Hubner adds, that he caused himself to be declared patriarch. Certain spurious histories of Russia go still further, and alledge, that he officiated in the pontifical character. Thus from a known fact, they have drawn erroneous conclusions, which happen but too frequently.

What I have called by the name of historical falsehoods, is still more common, and is the invention of flattery, or a foolish fondness for the marvellous. The historian who, to please a powerful family, prostitutes his pen to praise a tyrant, is a base wretch: he who endeavours to blacken the memory of a good prince, is a villain;

lain; and the romancist who publishes the inventions of his own brain, for real facts, is a contemptible creature. The man who in former times made whole nations pay reverence to his fables, would now hardly be read by the meanest of the people.

There are some critics who deal still deeper in falsehood: such are those who alter passages, or else misconstrue them; and who, inspired by envy, write with ignorance against works of real utility: but let us leave those vipers to gnaw the file, as the fittest punishment for their invidious labours.

THE

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
RUSSIAN Empire under PETER the
GREAT.

CHAP. I.

Campaign of PRUTH.

SULTAN Achmet III. declared war against Peter I. not from any regard to the king of Sweden, but, as may readily be supposed, merely from a view to his own interest. The khan of the Crim Tartars could not, without dread, behold a neighbour become so powerful as Peter I. The Porte had, for some time, taken umbrage at the number of ships which this prince had on the Palus Mæotis, and in the Black Sea, at his fortifying the city of Asoph, and at the flourishing state of the harbour of Taganroc, already become famous; and, lastly, at his great series of successes, and at the ambition which success never fails to augment.

It is neither true, nor even probable, that the Porte should have begun the war against the
czar,

czar, on the Palus Mæotis, for no other reason than because a Swedish ship had taken a bark on the Baltic, on board of which has found a letter from a minister, whose name has never been mentioned. Norberg tells us, that this letter contained a plan for the conquest of the Turkish empire; that it was carried to Charles XII. who was then in Turkey, and was by him sent to the divan: and that, immediately after the receipt of this letter, war was declared. But this story carries the mark of fiction with it. It was the remonstrances of the khan of Tartary, who was more uneasy about the neighbourhood of Asoph, than the Turkish divan, that induced this latter to give orders for taking the field*.

It was in the month of August, and before the czar had completed the reduction of Livonia, when Achmet III. resolved to declare war against him. The Turks, at that time, could hardly have had the news of the taking of Riga, and, therefore, the proposal of restoring

* The account this chaplain gives of the demands of the Grand Signior is equally false and puerile. He says, that sultan Achmet, previous to his declaring war against the czar, sent to that prince a paper, containing the conditions on which he was willing to grant him peace. These conditions, Norberg tells us, were as follows: "That Peter should renounce his alliance with Augustus, reinstate Stanislaus in the possession of the crown of Poland, restore all Livonia to Charles XII. and pay that prince the value in ready money of what he had taken from him at the battle of Pultowa; and, lastly, that the czar should demolish his newly-built city of Petersburg." This piece was forged by one Brazey, a half-starved pamphleteer, and author of a work intitled, *Memoirs Satyrical, Historical, and Entertaining*. It was from this fountain Norberg drew his intelligence; and however he may have been the confessor of Charles XII. he certainly does not appear to have been his confidant.

to the king of Sweden the value in money, of the effects he had lost at the battle of Pultowa, would have been the most absurd thing imaginable, if not exceeded by that of demolishing Petersbourg. The behaviour of Charles XII. at Bender, was sufficiently romantic; but the conduct of the Turkish divan would have been much more so, if we suppose it to have made any demands of this kind.

Nov. 1710.] The khan of Tartary, who was the principal instigator of this war, payed Charles a visit in his retreat at Bender. They were connected by the same interests, inasmuch as Europe makes part of the frontiers of Little Tartary. Charles and the khan were the two greatest sufferers by the successes of the czar; but the khan did not command the forces of the Grand Signior. He was like one of the feudatory princes of Germany, who served in the armies of the empire with their own troops, and were subject to the authority of the emperor's generals for the time being.

Nov. 29, 1710.] The first step taken by the divan, was to arrest Tolstoy, the czar's ambassador at the Porte, in the streets of Constantinople, together with thirty of his domesticks, who with their master were all confined in the prison of the Seven Towers. This barbarous custom, at which even savages would blush, is owing to the Turks having always a number of foreign ministers residing amongst them from other courts, whereas they never send any in return. They look upon the ambassadors of christian princes in no other light than as merchants or consuls; and having naturally as great a contempt for christians as they have for Jews, they

they seldom condescend to observe the laws of nations, in respect to them, unless forced to it; at least, they have hitherto persisted in this barbarous pride.

The famous vizir Achmet Cuprogli, the same who took the island of Candia, under Mahomet IV. insulted the son of the French ambassador, and even carried his brutality so far as to strike him, and afterwards to confine him in prison, without Lewis XIV. proud and lofty as he was, daring to resent it, otherwise than by sending another minister to the Porte. The christian princes, who are so remarkably delicate on the point of honour among themselves, and have even made it a part of the law of nations, seem to be utterly insensible on this head in regard to the Turks.

Never did a crowned head suffer greater affronts in the persons of his ministers, than czar Peter. In the space of a few years, his ambassador at the court of London was thrown into jail for debt, his plenipotentiary at the courts of Poland and Saxony was broke upon the wheel, by order of the king of Sweden; and now his minister at the Ottoman Porte was seized and thrown into a dungeon at Constantinople, like a common felon *.

We

* The new vizir embraced every opportunity of affronting the czar, in the person of his envoy, and particularly in giving the French ambassador the preference. It was customary, on the promotion of a grand vizir, for all the foreign ministers to request an audience of congratulation. Count Tolstoy was the first who demanded that audience; but was answered, "that the precedence had always been given to the ambassador of France;" whereupon Tolstoy informed the vizir, "that he must be deprived of the pleasure of waiting on him at all;" which, being maliciously represented, as expressing the utmost contempt

We have already observed, in the first part of this history, that he received satisfaction from queen Anne of England, for the insult offered to his ambassador at London. The horrible affront he suffered, in the person of Patkul, was washed away in the blood of the Swedes slain at the battle of Pultowa: but fortune permitted the violation of the laws of nations by the Turks to pass unpunished.

Jan. 1711.] The czar now found himself obliged to quit the theatre of war in the west, and march towards the frontiers of Turkey. He began by causing ten regiments, which he had in Poland, to advance towards Moldavia*. He then ordered marshal Sheremetow to set out from Livonia, with his body of forces, and, leaving prince Menzikof at the head of affairs at Petersburg, he returned to Moscow, to give orders for opening the ensuing campaign.

Jan. 18.] He now establishes a senate of regency, the regiment of guards begin their march, he issues orders for all the young nobility to follow him to the field, to learn the art of war, and places some of them in the station of cadets, and others in that of subaltern officers. Admiral Apraxin goes to Asoph to take the command by sea and land. These several measures being taken, the czar publishes an ordonance in Moscow for acknowledging a new empress. This was the person who had

contempt of his person, and the khan of Tartary being at the same time instigated to make several heavy complaints against the conduct of the Russians on the frontiers, count Tolstoy was immediately committed to the castle of the Seven Towers.

* It is very strange that so many writers always confound Walachia and Moldavia together.

been

been taken prisoner in Marienbourg, in the year 1702. Peter had, in 1696, repudiated his wife Eudoxia Lapoukin (or Lapouchin) by whom he had two children. The laws of his church allow of divorces; but had they not, Peter would have enacted a new law to permit them.

The fair captive of Marienbourg, who had taken the name of Catherine, had a soul superior to her sex and her misfortunes. She rendered herself so agreeable to the czar, that this prince would have her always near his person. She accompanied him in all his excursions, and most fatiguing campaigns; sharing in his toils, and softening his uneasinesses by her natural gaiety, and the great attention she shewed to oblige him on all occasions, and the indifference she expressed for the luxury, dress, and other indulgencies, of which the generality of her sex are, in other countries, wont to make real necessities. She frequently softened the passionate temper of the czar, and by making him more clement and merciful, rendered him more truly great. In a word, she became so necessary to him, that he married her privately, in 1707. He had already two daughters by her, and the following year she bore him a third, who was afterwards married to the duke of Holstein*.

March 17, 1711.] The czar made this private

* This duke of Holstein, at the time he married the daughter of Peter I. was a prince of very inconsiderable power, tho' one of the most ancient houses in Germany. His ancestors had been stripped of great part of their dominions by the kings of Denmark, so that, at the time of this marriage, he found himself greatly circumscribed in point of possessions; but, from this epoch of his alliance with the czar of Muscovy, we may date the rise of the ducal branch of Holstein, which

vate marriage known the very day he set out with her to try the fortune of his arms against the Turks. The several dispositions he had made seemed to promise a successful issue. The hetman of the Cossacks was to keep the Tartars in awe, who had already begun to commit ravages in the Ukaine. The main body of the Russian army was advancing towards the Niester, and another body of troops, under prince Galitzin, were in full march through Poland. Every thing went on favourably at the beginning; for Galitzin having met with a numerous body of Tartars near Kiow, who had been joined by some Cossacks and some Poles of King Stanislaus's party, as also a few Swedes, he defeated them

now fills the thrones of Russia and Sweden, and is likewise in possession of the bishoprick of Lubec, which, in all probability, will fall to this house, notwithstanding the late election, which at present is the subject of litigation, the issue of which will, to appearance, terminate in favour of the prince, son to the present bishop, through the protection of the courts of Vienna and Petersbourg. The empress Catherine, who now sits on the throne of Russia, is herself descended from this august house, by the side of her mother, who was sister to the king of Sweden, to the prince-bishop of Lubec, and to the famous prince George of Holstein, whose achievements made so much noise during the late war. This princess, whose name was Elizabeth, married the reigning prince of *Anhalt Zerbst*, whose house was indisputably the most ancient, and, in former times, the most powerful in all Germany, since they can trace their pedigree from the dukes of Ascania, who were formerly masters of the two electorates of Saxony and Brandenburg, as appears by their armorial bearings, which are, quarterly, the arms of Saxony and Brandenburg. Of this branch of *Zerbst* there is remaining only the present reigning prince, brother to the empress Catherine, who, in case he should die without issue, will succeed to the principality of *Yevern*, in East Friesland; from all which it appears already, that the family of Holstein is at present the most powerful in Europe, as being in possession of three crowns in the North.

entirely,

entirely, and killed near five thousand men. These Tartars had, in their march through the open country, made about ten thousand prisoners. It has been the custom of the Tartars, time immemorial, to carry with them a much greater number of cords than scimitars, in order to bind the unhappy wretches they surprize. The captives were all set free, and those who had made them prisoners were put to the sword. The whole Russian army, if it had been assembled together, would have amounted to sixty thousand men. It was to have been farther augmented by the troops belonging to the king of Poland. This prince, who owed every thing to the czar, came to pay him a visit at Jaroslaw, on the river Sana, the 3d of June 1714, and promised him powerful succours. War was now declared against the Turks, in the name of these two monarchs; but the Polish diet, not willing to break with the Ottoman Porte, refused to ratify the engagement their king had entered into. It was the fate of the czar to have, in the king of Poland, an ally who could never be of any service to him. He entertained the same hopes of assistance from the princes of Moldavia and Walachia, and was, in like manner, disappointed.

These two provinces ought to have taken this opportunity to shake off the Turkish yoke. These countries were those of the ancient Dacia, who, together with the Gepidi, with whom they were intermixed, did, for a long time, disturb the Roman empire. They were at length subdued by the emperor Trajan, and Constantine the First made them embrace the christian religion. Dacia was one of the provin-

ces of the eastern empire, but shortly after these very people contributed to the ruin of that of the west, by serving under the Odiacres and Theodorics.

They afterwards continued to be subject to the Greek empire, and when the Turks made themselves masters of Constantinople, were governed and oppressed by particular princes; at length they were totally subjected by the Padisha or Turkish emperor, who now granted them in investiture. The Hospodar or Waiwod, chosen by the Ottoman Porte to govern these provinces, is always a christian of the Greek church. The Turks, by this choice, gave a proof of their toleration, while our ignorant declaimers are accusing them of persecution. The prince nominated by the Porte is tributary to, or rather farms these countries of the grand seignior; this dignity being always conferred on the best bidder, or him who makes the greatest presents to the vizir, in like manner as the office of Greek patriarch at Constantinople. Sometimes this government is bestowed on a dragoman, that is to say, the interpreter to the divan. These provinces are seldom under the government of the same Waiwod, the Porte chusing to divide them, in order to be more sure of retaining them in subjection. Demetrius Cantemir was at this time Waiwod of Moldavia. This prince was said to be descended from Tamerlane, because Tamerlane's true name was *Timur*, and *Timur* was a Tartarian khan; and so, from the name *Tamurkan*, say they, came the family of *Kantemir*.

Bassaraba Brancovan had been invested with the principality of Walachia, but had not found
any

any genealogist to deduce his pedigree from the Tartarian conqueror; Cantamir thought the time now come to shake off the Turkish yoke, and render himself independent by means of the czar's protection. In this view he acted in the very same manner with Peter, as Mazeppa had done with Charles XII. He even engaged Bafaraba for the present to join him in the conspiracy, of which he hoped to reap all the benefit himself: his plan being to make himself master of both provinces. The bishop of Jerusalem, who was at that time at Walachia, was the soul of this conspiracy. Cantemir promised the czar to furnish him with men and provisions, as Mazeppa did the king of Sweden, and kept his word no better than he had done.

General Sheremetow advanced towards Jassi, the capital of Moldavia, to inspect, and occasionally assist the execution of these great projects. Cantemir came thither to meet him, and was received with all the honours due to a prince: but he acted as a prince in no one circumstance, but that of publishing a manifesto against the Turkish empire. The hospodar of Walachia, who soon discovered the ambitious views of his colleague, quitted his party, and returned to his duty. The bishop of Jerusalem dreading, with reason, the punishment due to his perfidy, fled and concealed himself: the people of Walachia and Moldavia continued faithful to the Ottoman Porte, and those who were to have furnished provisions for the Russian army, carried them to the Turks.

The vizir Baltagi Mahomet had already crossed the Danube at the head of 100,000 men, and was advancing towards Jassi, along the banks of the river Pruth (formerly the Hierasus) which

falls into the Danube, and which is nearly the boundary of Moldavia and Bassarabia. He then dispatched count Poniatowski *, a Polish gentleman, attached to the fortunes of the king of Sweden, to desire that prince to make him a visit, and see his army. Charles, whose pride

* This same count Poniatowski, who was at that time in the service of Charles XII. died afterwards Castellan of Cracovia, and first senator of the republic of Poland; after having enjoyed all the dignities to which a nobleman of that country can attain. His connections with Charles XII. during the prince's retirement at Bender, first made him taken notice of; and it is to be wished, for the honour of his memory, that he had waited till the conclusion of a peace between Sweden and Poland, to be reconciled to king Augustus; but following the dictates of ambition, rather than those of strict honour, he sacrificed the interests of both Charles and Stanislaus, to the care of his own fortune; and while he appeared the most zealous in their cause, he secretly did them all the ill services he could at the Ottoman Porte; to this double dealing, he owed the immense fortune of which he was afterwards possessed. He married the princess Czartoriska, daughter of the Castellan of Vilna, a lady, for her heroic spirit, worthy to have been born in the times of ancient Rome; when her eldest son, the present grand chamberlain of the crown, had that famous dispute with count Tarlo, palatine of Lublin, a dispute which made so much noise in all the public papers in the year 1742, this lady, after having made him shoot at a mark every day for three weeks, in order to be expert at firing, said to him, as he was mounting his horse to go to meet his adversary, "Go, my son, but if you do not acquit yourself with honour in this affair, never appear before me again." This anecdote may serve as a specimen of the character of our heroine. The family of Czartoriski is descended from the ancient Jagellons, who were for several ages, in lineal possession of the crown of Poland; and is, at this day, extremely rich and powerful by the alliances it has contracted, but they have never been able to acquire popularity; and so long as count Tarlo (who was killed in a duel with the young count Poniatowski) lived, had no influence in the dietines, or lesser assembly of the states, because Tarlo, who was the idol of the nobles, and a sworn enemy to the Czartoriski family, carried every thing before him, and nothing was done but according to his pleasure.

always

always got the better of his interest, would not consent to this proposal: he insisted, that the grand vizir should make him the first visit, in his asylum near Bender: when Poniatowski returned to the Ottoman camp, and endeavoured to excuse this refusal of his master, the vizir, turning to the khan of the Tartars, said, "This is the very behaviour I expected from this proud pagan." This mutual pride, which never fails of alienating the minds of those in power from each other, did no service to the king of Sweden's affairs; and indeed that prince might have easily perceived from the beginning, that the Turks were not acting for his interest, but for their own.

While the Turkish army was passing the Danube, the czar advanced by the frontiers of Poland, and passed the Boristhenes, in order to relieve marshal Sheremetow, who was then on the banks of the Pruth, to the southward of Jassi, and in danger of being daily surrounded by an army of 10,000 Turks, and an army of Tartars. Peter, before he passed the Boristhenes, was in doubt whether he should expose his beloved Catherine to these dangers which seemed to encrease every day; but Catherine, on her side, looked upon this solicitude of the czar for her ease and safety, as an affront offered to her love and courage, and pressed her consort so strongly on this head, that he found himself under a necessity to consent that she should pass the river with him. The army beheld her with eyes of joy and admiration, marching on horseback at the head of the troops, for she rarely made use of a carriage. After passing the Boristhenes, they had a tract of desert country to pass thro'

and then to cross the Bog, and afterwards the river Tiras, now called the Niefter, and then another desert to traverse, before they came to the banks of the Pruth. Catherine, during this fatiguing march, animated the whole army by her chearfulness and affability. She sent refreshments to such of the officers who were sick, and extended her care even to the meanest soldier.

July 4, 1711.] At length the czar brought his army in sight of Jassi. Here he was to establish his magazine. Bassaraba, the Hospodar of Walachia, who had again embraced the interest of the Ottoman Porte, but still, in appearance, continued a friend to the czar, proposed to that prince to make peace with the Turks, altho' he had received no commission from the grand vizir for that purpose. His deceit, however, was soon discovered, and the czar contented himself with demanding only provisions for his army, which Bassaraba neither could nor would furnish. It was very difficult to procure any supplies from Poland; and these, which prince Cantemir had promised, and which he vainly hoped to procure from Walachia, could not be brought from thence. These disappointments rendered the situation of the Russian army very disagreeable; and, as an addition to their afflictions, they were infected with an immense swarm of grasshoppers, that covered the face of the whole country, and devoured or spoiled every thing where they alighted. They were likewise frequently in want of water during their march through sandy deserts, and beneath a scorching sun; what little they could procure, they were obliged to have brought in vessels to the camp from a considerable distance.

During

During this dangerous and fatiguing march, the czar, by a singular fatality, found himself in the neighbourhood of his rival and competitor Charles, Bender not being above twenty-five leagues from the place where the Russian army was encamped near Jassi. Some parties of Cossacks made excursions even to the place of that unfortunate monarch's retreat; but the Crimean Tartars, who hovered round that part of the country, sufficiently secured him from any attempt that might be made to seize his person; and Charles waited in his camp with impatience, and not fear, the issue of the war.

Peter, as soon as he had established some magazines, marched in haste with his army to the right of the river Pruth. His essential object was to prevent the Turks, who were posted to the left, and towards the head of the river, from crossing it, and marching towards him. This effected, he would then be master of Moldavia and Wallachia: with this view he dispatched general Janus with the van-guard of the army, to oppose the passage of the Turks; but the general did not arrive till they had already begun to cross the river upon their bridges, upon which he was obliged to retreat, and his infantry was closely pursued by the Turks, till the czar came up in person to his assistance.

The grand vizir now marched directly along the river towards the czar. The two armies were very unequal in point of number: that of the Turks, which had been reinforced by the Tartarian troops, consisted of near 250,000 men, while that of the Russians hardly amounted to 35,000. There was indeed a considerable body of troops, headed by general Renne, on

their march from the other side of the Moldavian mountains; but the Turks had cut off all communication with those parts.

The czar's army now began to be in want of provisions, nor could, without the greatest difficulty, procure water, tho' encamped at a very small distance from the river, being exposed to a furious discharge from the batteries, which the grand vizir had caused to be erected on the left side of the river, under the care of a body of troops that kept up a constant fire against the Russians. By this relation, which is strictly circumstantial and true, it appears, that Baltagi Mahomet, the Turkish vizir, far from being the pusillanimous or weak commander which the Swedes have represented him, gave proofs on this occasion that he perfectly well understood his business. The passing the Pruth in the sight of the enemy, obliging him to retreat, and harrassing him in that retreat; the cutting off all communication between the czar's army, and a body of cavalry that was marching to reinforce it, the hemming in this army, without the least probability of a retreat, and the cutting off all supplies of water and provisions, by keeping it constantly under the check of the batteries on the opposite side of the river, were manœuvres that in no ways bespoke the unexperienced or indolent general.

Peter now saw himself in a situation even worse than that to which he had reduced his rival Charles XII. at Pultowa, being, like him, surrounded by a superior army, [and in greater want of provisions. Having confided in the promises of a prince, too powerful to be bound by those promises, he resolved upon

a re-

a retreat, and endeavoured to return towards Jassi, in order to chuse a more advantageous situation for his camp.

July 20, 1711.] He accordingly decamped under favour of the night; but his army had scarcely begun its march, when, at break of day, the Turks fell upon his rear; but the Preobasinski regiment facing about, and standing firm, did, for a considerable time, check the fury of their onset. The Russians then formed themselves, and made a line of entrenchments with their waggons and baggage. The same day the Turks returned again to the attack with the whole body of their army; and as a proof that the Russians knew how to defend themselves, let what will be alledged to the contrary, they also made head against this very superior force for a considerable time, killed a great number of their enemies, who in vain en- July 21. deavoured to break in upon them.

There were in the Ottoman army two officers belonging to the king of Sweden, namely, count Poniatowski, and the count of Spare, who had the command of a body of Cossacks in that prince's interest. My papers inform me, that these two generals advised the grand vizir to avoid coming to action with the Russians, and content himself with depriving them of supplies of water and provisions, which would oblige them either to surrender prisoners of war, or to perish with famine: other memoirs pretend, on the contrary, that these officers would have persuaded Mahomet to fall upon this feeble and half-starved army, in a weak and distressed condition, and put all to the sword. The first of these seem to be the most prudent and circum-
M 6 spect;

pect; but the second is more agreeable to the character of generals, who had been trained up under Charles XII.

The real fact is, that the grand vizir fell upon the rear of the Russian army at the dawn of day, which was thrown into confusion, and there remained only a line of 400 men to confront the Turks. This small body formed itself with amazing quickness, under the orders of a German general, named Alard, who, to his immortal honour, made such rapid and excellent disposition on this occasion, that the Russians withstood, for upwards of three hours, the repeated attack of the whole Ottoman army, without losing a foot of ground.

The czar now found himself amply repaid for the immense pains he had taken to enure his troops to strict discipline. At the battle of Narva, 60,000 men were defeated by only 8000, because the former were undisciplined; and here we behold a rear-guard, consisting of only 8000 Russians, sustaining the efforts of 150,000 Turks, killing 7000 of them, and obliging the rest to return back.

After this sharp engagement, both armies entrenched themselves for that night: but the Russians still continued enclosed, and deprived of all provisions, even water; for notwithstanding they were so near the river Pruth, yet they did not dare approach its banks; for as soon as any parties were sent out to find water, a body of Turks posted on the opposite shore drove them back by a furious discharge from their cannon loaded with chain shot: and the body of the Turkish army which had attacked that of the czar the day before, continued to play upon them

them from another quarter with the whole force of their artillery.

The Russian army appeared now to be lost beyond resource, by its position, by the inequality of numbers, and by the want of provisions. The skirmishes on both sides were frequent and bloody: the Russian cavalry being almost all dismounted, could no longer be of any service, unless by fighting on foot: in a word, the situation of affairs were desperate. It will be sufficient to cast our eyes on the following exact chart of the situation of the czar's camp, and that of the Ottoman army, to perceive that there could not possibly be a more dangerous position than the former. It was out of their power to retreat, they had nothing left but to gain a complete victory, to perish to the last man, or to be made slaves by the infidels.

All the accounts and memoirs of those times unanimously agree, that the czar, divided within himself, whether or not he should expose his wife, his army, his empire, and the fruits of all his labours, to almost inevitable destruction; retired to his tent oppressed with grief, and seized with violent convulsions, to which he was naturally subject, and which the present desperate situation of his affairs brought upon him with redoubled violence. In this condition he remained alone in his tent, having given positive orders, that no one should be admitted to be a witness to the distraction of his mind. But Catherine hearing of his disorders, forced her way in to him, and on this occasion Peter found how happy it was for him that he had permitted his wife to accompany him in this expedition.

A wife

A wife who like her had faced death in its most horrible shapes, and had exposed her person like the meanest soldier, to the fire of the Turkish artillery, for the sake of her husband, had an undoubted right to speak to her husband, and to be heard. The czar accordingly listened to what she had to say, and in the end suffered himself to be persuaded to try and send to the vizir with proposals of peace.

It has been a custom for time immemorial throughout the East, that when any people applies for an audience of the sovereign or his representative, they must not pretend to approach them without a present. On this occasion therefore Catherine mustered the few jewels that she had brought with her, on this military tour, in which no magnificence or luxury were admitted; to these she added, two black foxes skins, and what ready money she could collect; the latter was designed for a present to the Kiaia. She made choice herself of an officer, in whose fidelity and understanding she thought she could depend, who, accompanied with two servants, was to carry the presents to the grand vizir, and afterwards to deliver the money intended for the Kiaia into his own hand. This officer was likewise charged with a letter from marshal Sheremetow to the grand vizir. The memoirs of czar Peter mention this letter, but they take no notice of the other particulars of Catherine's conduct in this business; however, they are sufficiently confirmed by the declaration issued by Peter himself in 1723, when he carried Catherine to be crowned empress, wherein we find these words; "She has been of the greatest assistance to us in all our dangers, and particularly

“ ticularly in the battle of Pruth, when our army was reduced to 22,000 men.” If the czar had then indeed no more men capable of bearing arms, the service which Catherine did him on that occasion, were fully equivalent to the honours and dignities conferred upon her. The MS. journal of Peter the Great observes, that the day of the bloody battle, (on the 20th July) he had 31,554 foot, and 6692 horse, the latter almost all dismounted: he must then have lost 16,246 men in that engagement. The same memoirs affirm, the loss sustained by the Turks greatly exceeded that of the Russians; for as the former rushed upon the czar’s troops pell-mell, and without observing any order, hardly a single fire of the latter missed its effect. If this is fact, the affair of the 20th and 21st of July was one of the most bloody that had been known for many ages.

We must either suspect Peter the Great of having been mistaken, in his declaration at the crowning of the empress when he acknowledges “ his obligations to her for having saved his army, which was reduced to 22,000 men,” or accuse him of a falsity in his journal, wherein he says, that the day on which the above battle was fought, his army, exclusive of the succours he expected from the other side the Moldavian mountains, amounted to 31,554 foot, and 6692 horse. According to this calculation, the battle of Pruth must have been by far more terrible than the historians or memorialists have represented on either side. There must certainly be some mistake here, which is no uncommon thing in the relations of campaigns, especially when the writer enters into a minute detail of circumstances.

circumstances. The surest method therefore on these occasions, is to confine themselves to the principal events, the victory, and the defeat; as we can very seldom know with any degree of certainty the exact loss on either side.

But however here the Russian army might be reduced in point of numbers, there were still hopes, that the grand vizir, deceived by their vigorous and obstinate resistance, might be induced to grant them peace upon such terms as might be honourable to his master's arms, and at the same time not absolutely disgraceful to those of the czar. It was the great merit of Catherine to have perceived this possibility, at a time when her consort and his generals expected nothing less than inevitable destruction.

Norberg, in his history of Charles XII. quotes a letter, sent by the czar to the grand vizir, in which he expresses himself thus. " If, contrary
" to my intentions, I have been so unhappy as
" to incur the displeasure of his highness, I am
" ready to make reparation for any cause of complaint he may have against me; I conjure you,
" most noble general, to prevent the further effusion of blood; give orders, I beseech you, to
" put a stop to the dreadful and destructive fire
" of your artillery, and accept of the hostage I
" herewith send you."

This letter carries all the marks of falsity with it, as do indeed most of the random pieces of Norberg: it is dated 11th July N. S. whereas no letter was sent to Baltagi Mahomet, till the 21st N. S. neither was it the czar who wrote to the vizir, but his general Sheremetow: there were no such expressions made use of as

" if

“ if the czar has had the misfortune to incur the
“ displeasure of his highness,” such terms being
suitable only to a subject who implores the pardon
of his sovereign, whom he has offended. There was
no mention made of any hostage, nor was any one
sent. The letter was carried by an officer, in the
midst of a furious cannonade on both sides. Sheremetow
in this letter only reminded the vizir, of certain overtures of
peace, that the Porte had made at the beginning of
the campaign through the mediation of the Dutch and
English ministers, and by which the divan demanded
that the fort and harbour of Taganroc should be given
up, which were the real subjects of the war.

Some hours elapsed before the messenger received
an answer from the grand vizir, and it was apprehended
that he had either been killed by the enemy’s cannon,
or that they detained him prisoner. A second courier
was therefore dispatched with duplicates of the former
letters, and a council of war was immediately held,
at which Catherine was present. At this council ten
general officers signed the following resolution.

“ Resolved, if the enemy will not accept the
“ conditions proposed, and should insist upon
“ our laying down our arms, and surrendering
“ at discretion, that all the ministers and general
“ officers are unanimously of opinion, to cut their
“ way through the enemy sword in hand.”

In consequence of this resolution, a line of
entrenchments was thrown round the baggage,
and the Russians marched some few paces out
of their camp, towards the enemy, when the
grand

grand vizir caused a suspension of arms to be proclaimed between the two armies.

All the writers of the Swedish party have treated the grand vizir as a cowardly and infamous wretch, who had been bribed to sell the honour of his master's arms. In the same manner have several authors accused count Piper of receiving money from the duke of Marlborough, to persuade the king of Sweden to continue the war against the czar; and have laid to the charge of the French minister, that he purchased the peace of Seville for a stipulated sum. Such accusations ought never to be advanced but on very strong proofs. It is very seldom that a minister will stoop to such meannesses, which are always discovered sooner or latter by those who have been entrusted with the payment of the money, or by the publick registers, which never lie. A minister of state stands as a publick object to the eyes of all Europe. His credit and influence depend wholly upon his character, he is always sufficiently rich to be above the temptation of becoming a traitor.

The place of viceroy of the Turkish empire is so illustrious, and the profits annexed to it, in time of war, so immense, there was such a profusion of every thing necessary, and even luxurious, in the camp of Baltagi Mahomet, and, on the other hand, so much poverty and distress in that of the czar, that surely the grand vizir was rather in a condition to give than to receive. The trifling present of a woman who had nothing to send but a few skins and some jewels, in compliance with the established custom of all courts, or rather those in particular of the East, can never be considered in the light of a bribe.

The

The frank and open conduct of Baltagi Mahomet seems at once to give the lie to the black accusations with which so many writers have stained their relations. Vice-chancellor Shafiroff paid the vizir a public visit in his tent: every thing was transacted in an open manner, on both sides, and indeed it could not be otherwise. The very first article of the negociation was entered upon in the presence of a person wholly devoted to the king of Sweden, a domestic of count Poniatowski, who was himself one of that monarch's generals. This man served as interpreter, and the several articles were publicly reduced to writing by the vizir's chief secretary, Hummer Effendi. Moreover, count Poniatowski was there in person. The present sent to the kiaia was offered probably in form, and every thing was transacted agreeably to the oriental customs. Other presents were made by the Turks in return; so that there was not the least appearance of treachery or contrivance. The motives which determined the vizir to consent to the proposals offered him, were, first, that the body of troops under the command of general Renne, on the borders of the river Sireth, in Moldavia, had already crossed three rivers, and were actually in the neighbourhood of the Danube, where Renne had already made himself master of the town and castle of Brahila, defended by a numerous garrison, under the command of a bashaw. Secondly, the czar had likewise another body of troops advancing through the frontiers of Poland; and, lastly, it is more than probable that the vizir was not fully acquainted with the extreme scarcity that was felt in the Russian camp. One enemy seldom furnishes another

other with an exact account of his provisions and ammunition; on the contrary, either side are accustomed rather to make a parade of plenty, even at a time when they are in the greatest necessity. There can be no artifices practised to gain intelligence of the true state of an adversary's affairs, by means of spies, between the Turks and the Russians. The difference of their dress, of their religion, and of their language, will not permit it. They are moreover strangers to that desertion which prevails in most of our armies, and consequently the grand vizir could not be supposed to know the desperate condition to which the czar's army was reduced.

Baltagi, who was not fond of war, and who, nevertheless, had conducted this very well, thought that his expedition would be sufficiently successful if he put his master in possession of the towns and harbours which made the subject of the war, stopt the progress of the victorious army under Renne, and obliged that general to quit the banks of the Danube, and return back into Russia, and for ever shut the entrance of the Palus Mæotis, the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the Black Sea, against an enterprising prince; and, lastly, if he avoided taking these certain advantages, on the hazard of a new battle (in which, after all, despair might have got the better of superiority of numbers.) The preceding day only he had beheld his janissaries repulsed, with loss; and there wanted not examples of many victories having been gained by the weaker over the strong. Such then were Mahomet's reasons for accepting the proposals of peace. His conduct, however, did
not

not merit the approbation of Charles's officers, who served in the Turkish army, nor of the khan of Tartary. It was the interest of the latter, and his followers, to reject all terms of accommodation which would deprive them of the opportunity of ravaging the frontiers of Russia and Poland. Charles XII. desired to be revenged on his rival the czar; but the general, and the first minister of the Ottoman empire, was neither influenced by the private thirst of revenge, which animated the Christian monarch, nor by the desire of booty, which actuated the Tartar chief.

As soon as the suspension of arms was agreed to, and signed, the Russians purchased of the Turks the provisions, of which they stood in need. The articles of the peace were not signed at that time, as is related by La Motraye, and which Norberg has copied from him. The vizir, among other conditions, demanded that the czar should promise not to interfere any more in the Polish affairs. This was a point particularly insisted upon by count Poniatowski; but it was, in fact, the interest of the Ottoman crown, that the kingdom of Poland should continue in its then defenceless and divided state; accordingly this demand was reduced to that of the Russian troops evacuating the frontiers of Poland. The khan of Tartary, on his side, demanded a tribute of forty thousand sequins. This point, after being long debated, was at length given up.

The grand vizir insisted a long time, that prince Cantemir should be delivered up to him, as Patkul had been to the king of Sweden. Cantemir was exactly in the same situation as Mazepa

zeppa had been. The czar caused that hetman to be arraigned and tried for his defection, and afterwards to be executed in effigy. The Turks were not acquainted with the nature of such proceeding; they knew nothing of trials for contumacy, nor of public condemnations. The affixing a sentence on any person, and executing him in effigy, were the more unusual amongst them, as their law forbids the representation of any human likeness whatever. The vizir in vain insisted on Cantemir's being delivered up, Peter peremptorily refused to comply, and wrote the following letter with his own hand, to his vice-chancellor Shaffiroff.

“ I can resign to the Turks all the country,
“ as far as Curzka, because I have hopes of
“ being able to recover it again; but I will, by
“ no means, violate my faith, which, once for-
“ feited, can never be retrieved. I have no-
“ thing I can properly call my own, but my ho-
“ nour. If I give up that, I cease to be longer
“ a king.”

At length the treaty was concluded, and signed, at a village called Falksen, on the river Pruth. Among other things, it was stipulated, that Asoph, and the territories belonging thereto, should be restored, together with all the ammunition and artillery that were in the place, before the czar made himself master thereof, in 1696. That the harbour of Taganroc, in the Zabach Sea, should be demolished, as also that of Samara, on the river of the same name; and several other fortresses. There was likewise another article added, respecting the king of Sweden, which article alone sufficiently shews the little regard the vizir had for that prince;
for

for it was therein stipulated, that the czar should not molest Charles, in his return to his dominions, and that afterwards the czar and he might make peace with each other, if they were so inclined.

It is pretty evident by the wording of this extraordinary article, that Baltagi Mahomet had not forgot the haughty manner in which Charles XII. had behaved to him a short time before, and it is not unlikely that this very behaviour of the king of Sweden might have been one inducement with Mahomet to comply so readily with his rival's proposals for peace. Charles's glory depended wholly on the ruin of the czar; but we are seldom inclinable to exalt those who express a contempt for us: however this prince, who refused to pay the vizir a visit in his camp, on his invitation, when it was certainly his interest to have been upon good terms with him, now came thither in haste and unasked, when the work which put an end to all his hopes was on the point of being concluded. The vizir did not go to meet him in person, but contented himself with sending two of his bashaws, nor would he stir out of his tent, till Charles was within a few paces of it.

This interview passed as every one knows, in mutual reproaches. Several historians have thought that the answer which the vizir made to the king of Sweden, when that prince reproached him with not making the czar prisoner, when he might have done it so easily, was the reply of a weak man. "If I had taken him prisoner," said Mahomet, who would there be to govern "his dominions."

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It is very easy however to comprehend, that this was the answer of a man who was piqued with resentment; and these words which he added, "for it is not proper that every crowned head should quit his dominions," sufficiently shewed that he intended to mortify the refugee of Bender.

Charles gained nothing by his journey, but the pleasure of tearing the vizir's robe with his spurs, while the officer who was in a condition to make him repent this splenetic insult seemed not to notice it, in which he was certainly greatly superior to Charles. If any thing could have made that monarch sensible in the midst of his life, how easily fortune can put greatness to the blush, it would have been the reflection, that at the battle of Pultowa, a pastry-cook's boy had obliged the whole army to surrender at discretion, and in this of Pruth a wood-cutter was the arbiter of his fate, and that of his rival the czar; for the vizir Baltagi Mahomet had been a cutter of wood in the grand seignior's seraglio, as his name implied; and far from being ashamed of that title, he gloried in it: so much do the manners of the Eastern people differ from our's.

When the news of this treaty reached Constantinople, the grand seignior was so well pleased, that he ordered publick rejoicings to be made for a whole week, and Mahomet, kiaia or lieutenant general, who brought the tidings to the divan, was instantly raised to the dignity of Boujouk Imraour, or master of the horse, a certain proof that the sultan did not think himself ill served by his vizir.

Norberg

Norberg seems to have known very little of the Turkish government, when he says, that "the grand seignior was obliged to keep fair with Baltagi Mahomet, that vizir having rendered himself formidable." The janissaries indeed have often rendered themselves formidable to their sultans; but there is not one example of a vizir who has not been easily sacrificed to the will or orders of his sovereign, and Mahomet was in no condition to support himself by his own power. Besides, Norberg manifestly contradicts himself, by affirming in the same page, that the janissaries were irritated against Mahomet, and that the sultan stood in dread of his power.

The king of Sweden was now reduced to the necessity of forming cabals in the Ottoman court; and a monarch, who had so lately made kings by his own power, was now seen waiting for audience, and offering memorials and petitions which were refused.

Charles ran through all the ambages of intrigue, like a subject who endeavours to make a minister suspected by his master. In this manner he acted against Mahomet, and against those who succeeded him. At one time he addressed himself to the sultana Valide by means of a Jewess, who had admission into the seraglio; at another, he employed one of the eunuchs for the same purpose. At length he had recourse to a man who was to mingle among the grand seignior's guards, and, by counterfeiting a person out of his senses, to attract the attention of the sultan, and by that means deliver into his own hand a memorial from Charles. From all these various schemes, the king of Sweden drew

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only the mortification of seeing himself deprived of his thaim; that is to say, of the daily pension which the Porte of its generosity had assigned him for his subsistence, and which amounted to about 1500 French livres*. The grand visir, instead of remitting this allowance to him as usual, sent him an order, in the form of a friendly advice, to quit the grand seignior's dominions.

Charles, however, was absolutely determined not to depart, still flattering himself with the vain hopes that he should once more re-enter Poland and Russia with a powerful army of Turks. Every one knows what was the issue of his inflexible boldness in the year 1724, and how he engaged an army of Janissaries, Spahis and Tartars, with only himself, his secretaries, his valet de chambre, cook, and stable-men; that he was taken prisoner in that country, where he had been treated with the greatest hospitality; and that he at length got back to his own kingdom in the disguise of a courier, after having lived five years in Turkey: from all which it remains to be acknowledged, that if there was reason in the conduct of this extraordinary prince, it was a reason of a very different nature to that of other men.

* About 70 l. sterling.



